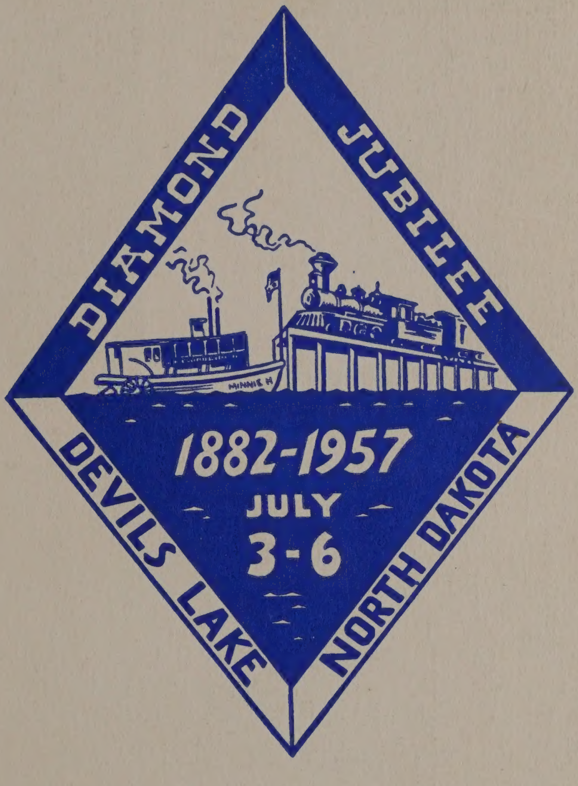
DEVILS LAKE'S
Seventy-Five Years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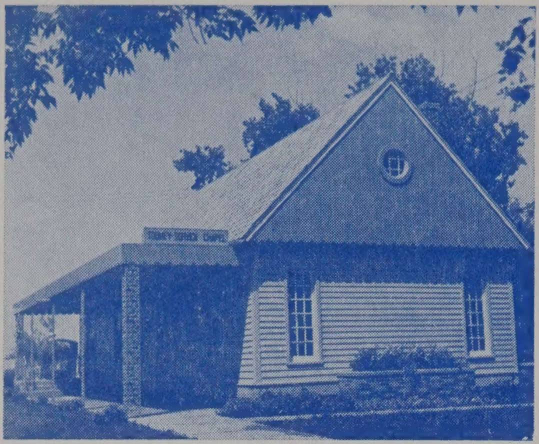

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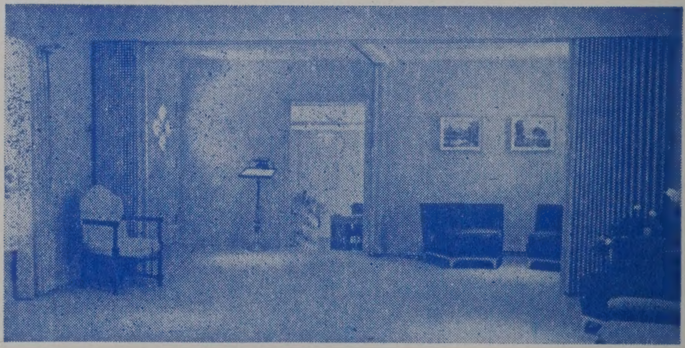

Welcome folks
to our
DIAMOND JUBILEE

Devils Lake's Seventy-Five Years

A Booklet Published by

DEVILS LAKE DIAMOND JUBILEE ASSOCIATION INC.

To Commemorate The

75th Anniversary

of the Settlement of Devils Lake, North Dakota

Foreword and Dedication

It is not possible to write a complete record of Devils Lake's romantic history and its colorful pioneers in the limited space that this booklet provides. We hope that you will find this record of the highlights of the biography of our city interesting.

It is only fitting that our booklet be dedicated to the sturdy, foresighted pioneers who gave us this modern, thriving community we have today and to their many descendants who still live in the beautiful and productive Lake Region.

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Sincere Congratulations To

DEVILS LAKE

ON ITS

1882 - DIAMOND JUBILEE - 1957

Early History of Devils Lake and Surrounding Territory

(Excerpts from a speech prepared by
EDWARD F. FLYNN,
Diamond Jubilee General Chairman)

The story of our "Enchanted Water" or as some called it, "Spirit Water," and named by the Indians "Mini-wakan," and the entire area in the neighborhood of the City of Devils Lake is an interesting one, perhaps more intriguing than that of any other city or place in North Dakota.

There is some evidence that the American Fur Company had an establishment on the shores of the lake in 1826. There is proof of this in reports of the Minnesota Historical Society. These men therefore were at Devils Lake before the Nicollet-Fremont expedition. We do know that the United States Government in 1839 sent Joseph Nicholas Nicollet and "The Pathfinder," John Charles Freemont, to the then Enchanted Water, accompanied by a distinguished group of scientists and others.

Nicollet was born in France in 1786 and did not come to the United States until he was 46 years old in 1832. Being a distinguished gentleman and cartographer, he was soon engaged by the United States to make trips into what is now Minnesota, and later to South and North Dakota for the purpose of making topographical and other maps of the territory.

John Charles Fremont was born in Savannah, Georgia, in 1813. His father, for whom he was named, was interested in Indians and exploration.

In conformity to the government's plan, Nicollet and Fremont explored portions of Minnesota in 1838, returning that fall to St. Louis. Early in April, 1839, Nicollet and Fremont partially equipped themselves at St. Louis for their expedition into the Dakotas. Fremont in his memoirs tells that on this trip Devils Lake "was the ultimate object of our expedition." Thus can be seen the importance of the Enchanted Water even in those early days.

The explorers left St. Louis in the American Fur Company's steamer "Antelope" which was making its regular voyage to its trading posts on the upper waters of the Missouri River. The little steamer had to plow through the turbulent spring waters of the river. It took seventy days to reach Fort Pierre, 1300 miles from St. Louis.

With Nicollet and Fremont when they left St. Louis were six men, four of them experi-

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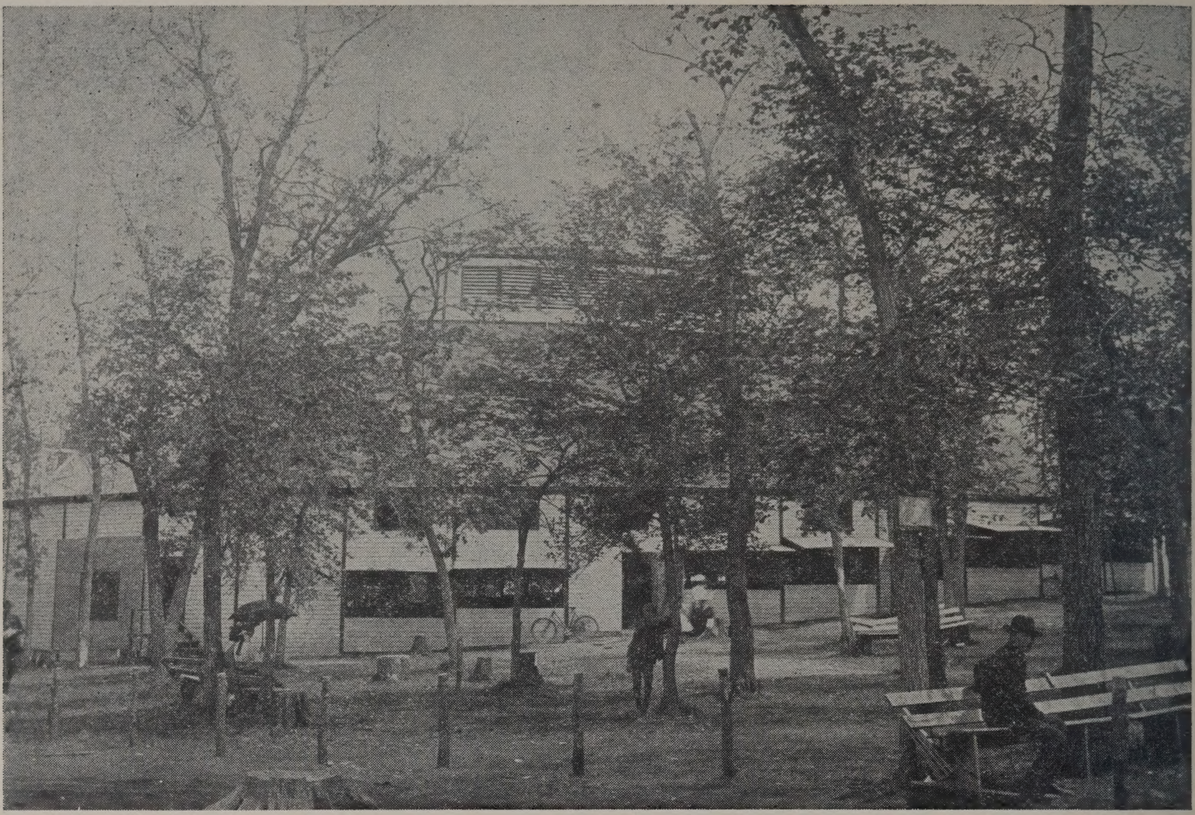

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enced in prairie and mountain travel. One of these was Etienne Provost, known as "The Man of the Mountains." Another was Louis Zindell, who had seen service as a noncommissioned officer of Prussian artillery, and who was skilled in the making of rockets and fireworks.

At Fort Pierre the party gave the Indian chiefs the usual gifts and were assured of safe passage over the Indian country.

Horses, carts, provisions, and their supplies having been obtained at Fort Pierre, all was ready for the trip to the land of the Enchanted Water. The party here was joined by six other men, including a Mr. May of Kentucky and a young man from Pembina on their way to the British colony on the Red River. William Dixon and Louison Freniere were engaged as interpreters and guides. They were excellent hunters and horsemen.

The trip was an exciting one. Fremont was lost when on a buffalo hunt and not found until the next morning. The night before he had seen a rocket shooting into the sky some fifteen miles away, evidently made by Zindell and sent up to guide Fremont. However, he decided to wait until the next morning, when Freniere and others found him. The party now came into contact with the illimitable buffalo herds moving slowly toward the plains along the Missouri River. The whole landscape as far as the eye could see was dotted with buffalo which trooped along in columns beside the expedition or stopped to graze in small groups. For three days Fremont and Nicollet were in the midst of this enormous herd of bison, working their way through the animals by day and so closely pressed by them at night that they had to hobble some of their horses and picket them all. While the expedition was pushing through these masses of buffalo, it fell in with an encampment of about 2,000 Sioux Indians, probably Sisseton and Wahpeton bands, such as are now located at Fort Totten.

After a short march of fourteen days, the party made its first camp on the famous war and hunting ground four miles from the Mini-wakan. Early in the day's march, the explorers obtained their first view of the woods and hills bordering the lake. Here they saw a conspicuous heart-shaped hill near the southern shore. "After an hour's march next day," Fremont states, "we pitched our camp at the head of a deep bay not far from the hill. To this the Indians have given the name of the "Heart of the Enchanted Water" by the whites translated "Heart of the Devils Lake." The name of the lake is Mini-wakan, "The Enchanted Water."

The Nicollet party remained at the Enchanted Water for over a week. They found from barometer readings that the top of the "En-

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chanted Hill" was 1766 feet above the sea, for the plateau, 1486 and for the lake 1476. From the latter we should perhaps be able to tell the depth of the lake at that time.

"Enchanted Water" was described by Fremont as "a beautiful sheet of water, the shores being broken into pleasing irregularity by promontories and many islands. As in some other lakes on the plateau, the water was brackish, but there are fish in it; and it is doubtless much freshened by the rains and melting snows of the spring. No outlet was found, but at the southern end there are low grounds by which at the season of high waters, the lake may discharge into the Shayan. This would put it among the sources of the Red River. The most extended view of its waters obtainable from any of the surrounding hills seemed to reach about forty miles in a northwesterly direction."

Devils Lake Area Not In Louisiana Purchase

A large portion of North Dakota northerly of a line running roughly from the southeastern corner of North Dakota diagonally about at the line of the Sheyenne River, on to Minot and the eastern Montana line, and including the Red River Valley on both sides and its drainage was not included in the Louisiana Purchase. The rest of North Dakota, containing about one-half of its area and which is in the Missouri River drainage was ceded in that purchase to the United States.

The northerly tract in which Devils Lake is situated was claimed by Great Britain in 1763. After the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, following the War of 1812, the boundary line between Canada and the United States was settled only to the Lake of the Woods in Minnesota and even that line was confusing. The United States claimed all land south of the 49th parallel, all the way from the Lake of the Woods to the Pacific Ocean. We pressed Great Britain to establish the line as we claimed it. But this great tract as far south as the Sheyenne River, which is a tributary of the Red River, drained into Hundson's Bay and England claimed it under a questionable right. Finally by the Convention of 1818 with England, the 49th parallel from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains was settled as our northern boundary line. England thus relinquished her old claim to the Red River Valley, and this great and valuable tract in the northern half of North Dakota.

It was probably because of this British claim that the half-breeds from Canada felt they had a right to hunt near Devils Lake even as late as 1839. Until 1818 the Hudson's Bay Company exercised almost sovereign rights over this territory, including Devils Lake.

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Fort Totten Established

As the white men moved westward to settle, the Indians became troublesome. Following the bloody uprising of the Sioux Indians in Southern Minnesota in the New Ulm area in 1862, these Indians continued to cause much trouble. In 1863 General Sibley of St. Paul, who had been instrumental in suppressing the Minnesota Indian insurrection, was instructed to follow the tribes, including those who were involved in the uprising into this general area. On his way here, he learned that about 600 lodges of Sioux had recently left Devils Lake and had moved toward the Missouri River. Sibley followed and drove them across the river. The government sent an exploring expedition to Devils Lake and other points with a view of establishing military posts to protect settlers and the Red River transportation.

General Sibley's plan was to locate all the Sioux at Devils Lake and Sisseton and surround them with a strong force of United States troops. Eventually General Sibley and General Alfred Sully, for whom Sully's Hill is named, rounded up the Indians and with proper federal approval, located them on reservations established at Devils Lake and Sisseton. During all the preliminary troubles, the Indians used Devils Lake as one of their assembling points.

Fort Totten was established in 1867, and the construction of the brick buildings, which are still there, was begun in 1868. Bricks for the buildings were made on the spot from clay found near the base of Sully's Hill. Because of limestone pebbles in the clay, all of the bricks had a tendency to crumble, and the brick buildings had to be painted to prevent that crumbling.

Frank Palmer was post trader at the fort and raised the first grain grown in this area—oats which he sold to the army for its horses. The Indians in the early days after the establishment of the fort were unruly and had to be punished severely.

Establishment of Creelsburgh

Lieutenant Heber M. Creel, a graduate of West Point, resigned from the army and settled on the north shore of Devils Lake. He surveyed a townsite and called it Creelsburgh. On November 1, 1882, a post office was established at Creelsburgh. This post office was changed to Creel City on February 28, 1883, and to Devils Lake on January 14, 1884. It really had been Devils Lake since the latter part of May 1883 when the Saint Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway Company decided to establish its "station on the lake" at this point and changed the name to Devils Lake.

Lieut. Creel thereupon sold the townsite land to a group of St. Paul people. Creel later

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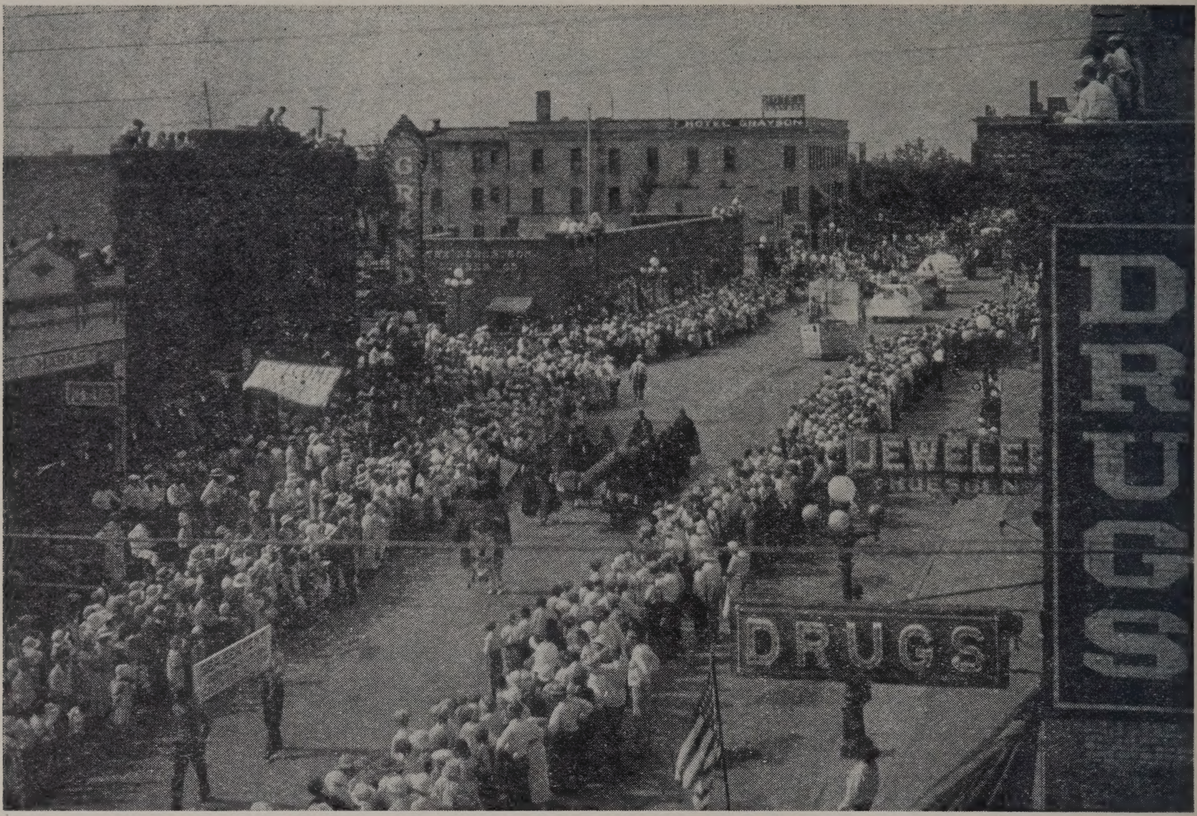

Street scene in Devils Lake during Golden Jubilee in 1933

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became Inspector General and Adjutant General of the North Dakota National Guard and was sometimes called "General Creel."

The Townsite Contest

Perhaps there never was a more spirited contest for the location of a townsite than that which took place on the north shore of the Enchanted Water in 1882 and 1883; and yet the actors in this drama were powerless to do anything about the selection of what was called "the townsite on the lake", for that was a matter to be decided by James J. Hill, who in 1882 became president of the Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway, predecessor of the Great Northern. The older road was generally called the "Manitoba."

The Manitoba reached Bartlett in 1882 and for a year, this little place was the westernmost end of the railway which has developed into such a great line today. Naturally Bartlett was a busy little bee-hive until the line moved on west the next year to what then became Devils Lake, but which was Creelsburgh in 1882, and early in 1883 was Creel City. Devils Lake City was perhaps two miles to the southeast of the present city, and Dana's Grove, Minnewaukan post office, another two miles or so further southeastt, and Odessa still further southeast. Rock Island was several miles almost due south of our present city.

The Ward Tragedy

There was keen rivalry for the location of the townsite on the lake between Devils Lake City, Creel City, Dana's Grove, Rock Island, and Odessa. The land in the neighborhood of these townsites was considered especially valuable. John Bell had taken as a homestead 160 acres located about ⅛ mile east of the present site of 12th avenue, and Alonza Hanshaw had settled on the adjoining mile-long quarter section to the east. Two young brothers from Chicago, Frederick A. and Charles F. Ward wanted these claims and squatted on them, well knowing that the land was claimed by two other men. The Wards were nephews of John V. Farwell, well known dry-goods wholesaler of Chicago. For some days prior to April 22, 1883, there were demands on the part of Bell and Hanshaw that the Wards move away from these caims, and there is evidence that they were ousted about April 20th.

The Wards returned to the claims on April 22, after arming themselves in order to resist further attempts to oust them. On that Sunday night, John Bell and his friends, eleven in number, drove to the claims, well armed and determined to drive the Wards away again, arriving at Bell's claim at eleven o'clock.

When they arrived at the scene, the men divided into two groups, six staying with the horses about 50 feet from the shanty, and six,

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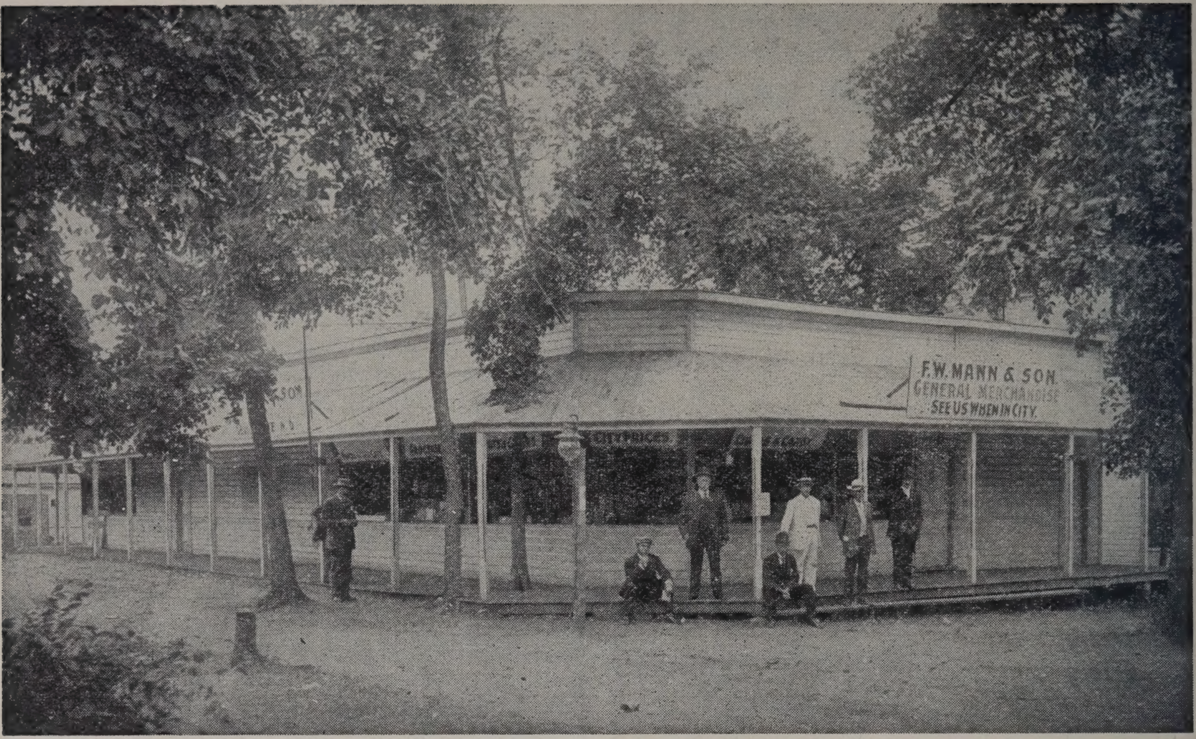
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with John Bell at the head, proceeded to the shack in which they could see the two Wards and another young man. The Wards were negotiating with the young man to move one of the shanties from the Bell claim to the Hanshaw claim where Charlie Ward had squatted. It appears that a dispute arose between Bell and Fred Ward when the latter came to the door of the shack after Bell had pounded on it for some time. In the melee that followed, the two Wards were killed and a member of the citizens group was shot in the arm.

A coroner's jury found that the Wards had died of gunshot wounds inflicted "by parties unknown to the jury, members of an armed mob." All twelve members of the citizens group were arrested and indicted for manslaughter. At a trial held in Grand Forks in July, 1884, the first defendant was acquitted on a plea of self-defense after the jury had deliberated for five hours. The District Attorney then asked that the indictments against the other defendants be dismissed, feeling that further trials would be useless.

The Manitoba Decides on Creel City

The May 26, 1883, issue of the Inter-Ocean Newspaper came out with headlines announcing the decision of the Manitoba to locate at Creel City:

CREEL CITY GETS BOTH RAILROAD AND LAND OFFICE

NAME OF CITY CHANGED FROM CREEL CITY TO DEVILS LAKE

Change of Name Ordered by Railway.
The Depot Located.

"The long agony of the townsite war is over at last, and our city came in ahead with both depot and land office. Mr. N. D. Miller, Division Engineer of the Manitoba, was in the city the early part of the week with the engineer corps, and formally located the depot 1200 feet south of the Lakeview House in the very heart of the business portion of the city. Col. John Farrington in the capacity of trustee, both for the road and the syndicate, opened the sale of lots on Tuesday, and 300 already have been sold to private parties. There was, of course, a scramble for choice locations and everybody who was able to buy went away smiling and happy, feeling that his fortune was made.

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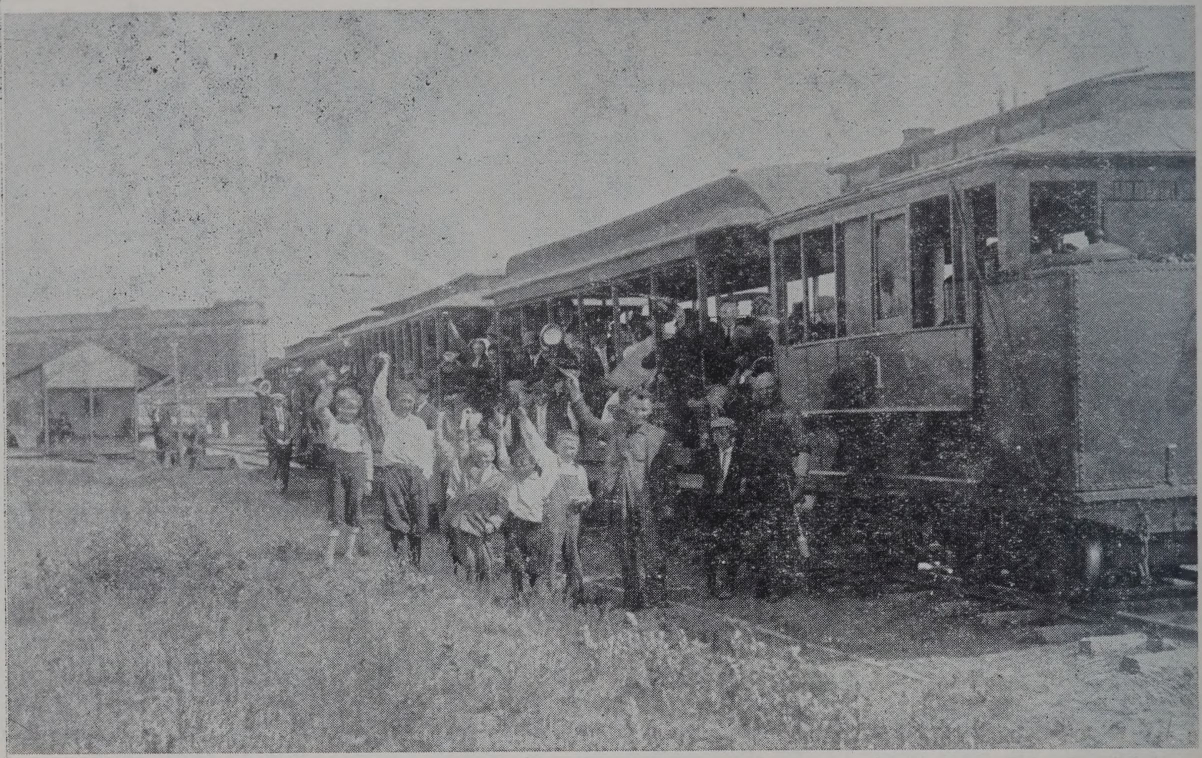

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exhaustible gravel banks and no end of sand, all point to this as one of the great cities of North Dakota in the near future."

The Big Fire

In 1884 the entire business portion of Devils Lake was destroyed by fire. For a time it was a calamity, but in fact it was a blessing for most of the old frame buildings were replaced by brick structures, many of which are still standing and in service.

Devils Lake continued to grow, though not rapidly. In 1907, the Great Northern Railway located its shops here, and employment and population were given quite a boost.

Devils Lake Schools

The first school in Ramsey County was a Catholic Mission School on the south side of Devils Lake. The Devils Lake School District was incorporated in 1883 and was organized as a special school district on November 14, 1889.

On November 14, 1885, the Devils Lake Lake schools consisted of 110 pupils with only two teachers, one of whom was John F. Cowan who afterwards became District Attorney, Superintendent of Schools, District Judge, and Attorney General of North Dakota. By 1889 there was a well-organized school system. School was then being held in a frame school building on the present site of the Washington grade school. This was only a grade school with L. B. Fancher as superintendent.

After overcoming many obstacles, Mr. Fancher was able to add an accredited high school course, and in the spring of 1893, his first class was graduated. The class consisted of two young men, Samuel Rainville and Albert C. Baker, both of whom later became medical doctors. The second class of graduates in 1895 consisted of nine young women and one young man. Since then the smallest class had only two young men, Earl Duell and George Walker. This was in 1900. The largest class was graduated in 1941 and included 113 students.

The first school building proved inadequate for the rapidly growing town, so a new school was built at the north end of Kelly Avenue facing on Seventh Street. This was occupied for the first time in the fall of 1893 and was called Central School. The original schoolhouse was then sold to the Sisters of Mercy and became Devils Lake's first hospital, called St. Vincent de Paul Hospital. Central School first housed the entire school system. Later Washington and Lincoln schools were built in different areas of the city. These were both grade

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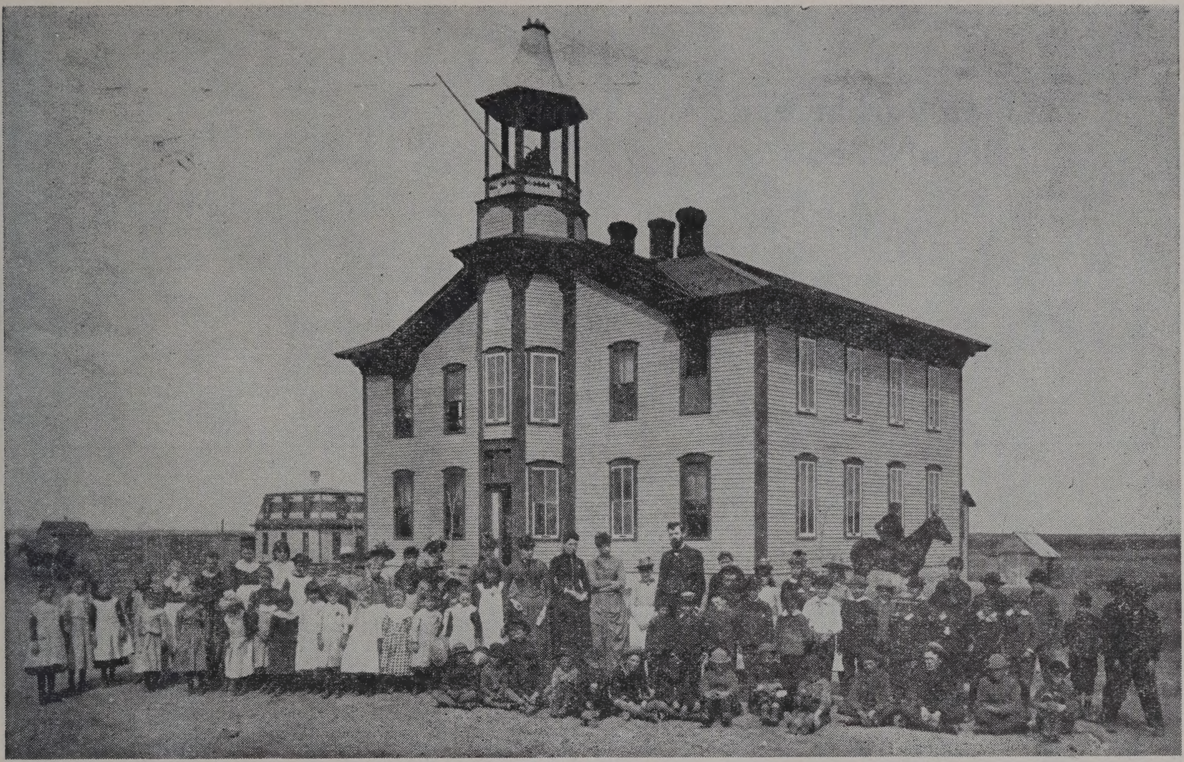

First public school in Devils Lake, located on the site of the Washington School. House in background is still standing in the 700 block on Fourth Street.

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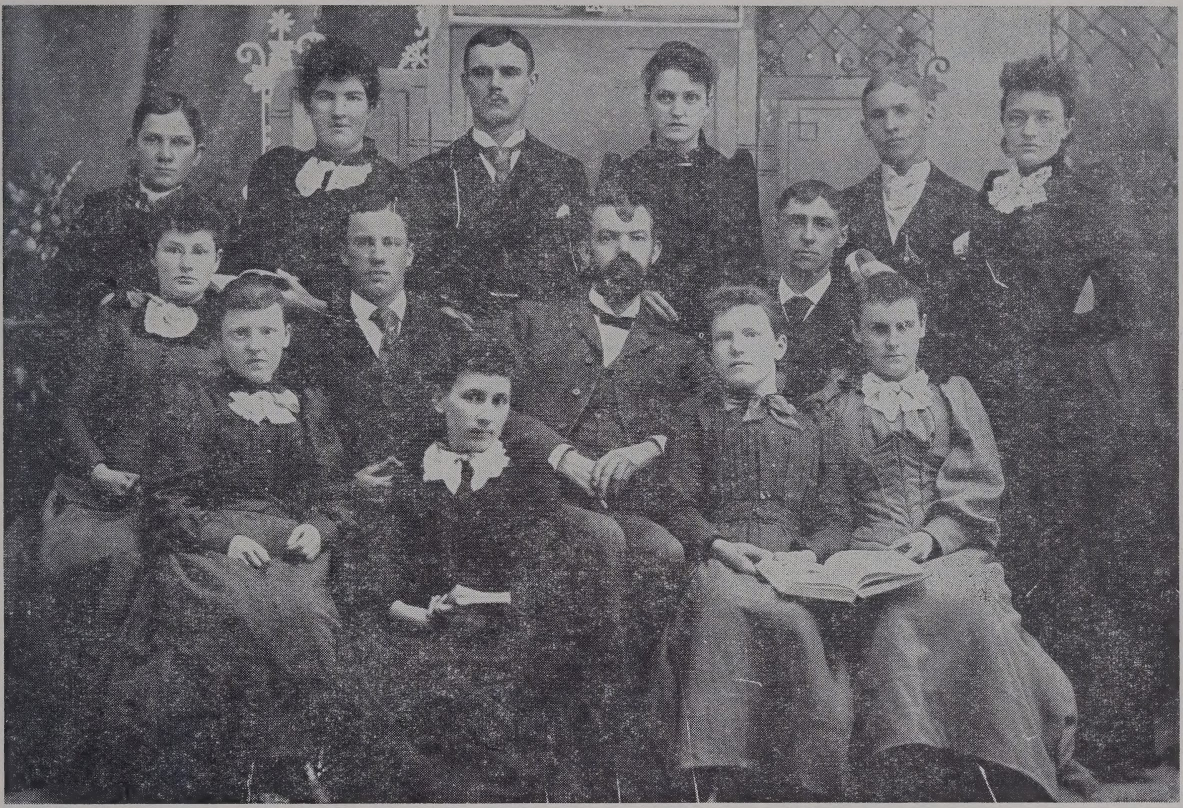

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Phone 136

schools, while Central, besides taking care of some of the grades, also was occupied by the high school classes. Continued growth of the city necessitated a separate high school in 1913. This building is now called Pershing School. As the years rolled past and the school population grew and grew, it became necessary to do more school building, and on October 21, 1937, the present Central High School building was dedicated.

In 1941 a fully accredited Junior College was added to the Devils Lake school system. This Junior College operates within the buildings of the Devils Lake School system, but is self-supporting as far as instructors' salaries are concerned. The Junior College provides an opportunity for young people of Devils Lake and the surrounding territory to continue their education after high school by providing two years of accredited college work. A complete business training course is also available.

Summer of 1957 finds three new elementary schools almost ready for occupancy. The Minnie H. School is a 6 unit school located on the south side near the old docks of the steamboat. The Sweetwater School is also a 6 unit school and is located about 100 yards east of the Lincoln School. The Prairieview School is a 12 unit school and is located on the edge of town at the east end of Second Street.

A complete parochial school system is also provided in Devils Lake by St. Mary's Academy. The school's plant consists of the original academy building plus a new gymnasium located just to the east of the original building, and the brand-new St. Joseph's School building which is a grade school and is located on Tenth Avenue at the east end of Ninth Street, just west of the Mercy Hospital.

With a completely modern public school plant from the elementary grades through junior College, and an excellent parochial school establishment, Devils Lake in 1957 offers educational opportunities second to none for a town of its size.

THE FARMERS GRAIN AND SHIPPING COMPANY

One of the most unusual accomplishments of farmers anywhere was the building of the Farmers Grain and Shipping Company, called the Farmers Line. It was built from Devils Lake to Starkweather in 1902 and in 1905 constructed an additional 44 miles to Hansboro near the Canadian border. The group which built the railroad was headed by Joseph M. Kelly and included Rasmus Sorenson, W. G. Samuel, Norman Morrison, William Webster, and many other successful farmers.

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A. M. Roberts — C. W. Roberts

MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Elected to serve as members of the Constitutional Convention from Ramsey County were Abram O. Whipple, Republican, Edward H. Lohnes, Republican, and James F. O'Brien, Democrat.

Mr. Whipple, a native of Vermont and graduate of Williams College, who came from Northfield, Minn., on one of the first trains to reach Creel City, became very active in the affairs of this frontier village. He was the first Receiver of the Devils Lake Land Office, established the First National Bank, served the city as mayor for three successive terms, and was instrumental in having the North Dakota State School for the Deaf located at Devils Lake.

He married Mary Josephine Ten Broechm, a native of New York, in 1877. They had four children. Mr. Whipple died in Devils Lake in 1906 at the age of 62. Mrs. Whipple lived to be past 92.

Mr. Lohnes was born in New York State April 24, 1844. He came to Fort Totten in July, 1867, as a member of the 31st U. S. Infantry and assisted in building the log fort.

After leaving the Army he had a contract to carry the mail from Fort Abercrombie and afterwards from Jamestown to Fort Totten.

Mr. Lohnes took up a homstead on Sweetwater Lake in 1882. He was elected to the Board of County Commissioners, but resigned to become a member of the Constitutional Convention. He later served as a Representative in the Legislative Assembly of the State.

Before joining the regular army and coming to Dakota, Mr. Lohnes served nearly four years in the Civil War with the New York heavy artillery.

He married a daughter of Chief Waa Nasa. They had seven children. His wife preceded him in death. On his demise, he was survived by 74 descendants.

James F. O'Brien was born in Patrickstown, Canada, in July, 1853. His parents moved to St. Paul in 1857. He was educated at the Cathedral school there and afterwards took up the study of law. He arrived in Devils Lake in 1883 to take charge of the affairs of the Townsite Company. He was elected District Attorney for Ramsey County in 1888. He took an active part in the affairs of the city and state and was chosen one of the three members of the Constitutional Convention. Later Mr. O'Brien was a candidate for Congress on the Democratic ticket. A commission for him as United States District Attorney for N. Dak. was on the way from Washington, D. C., when he died very unexpectedly at the age of 40. He was unmarried.

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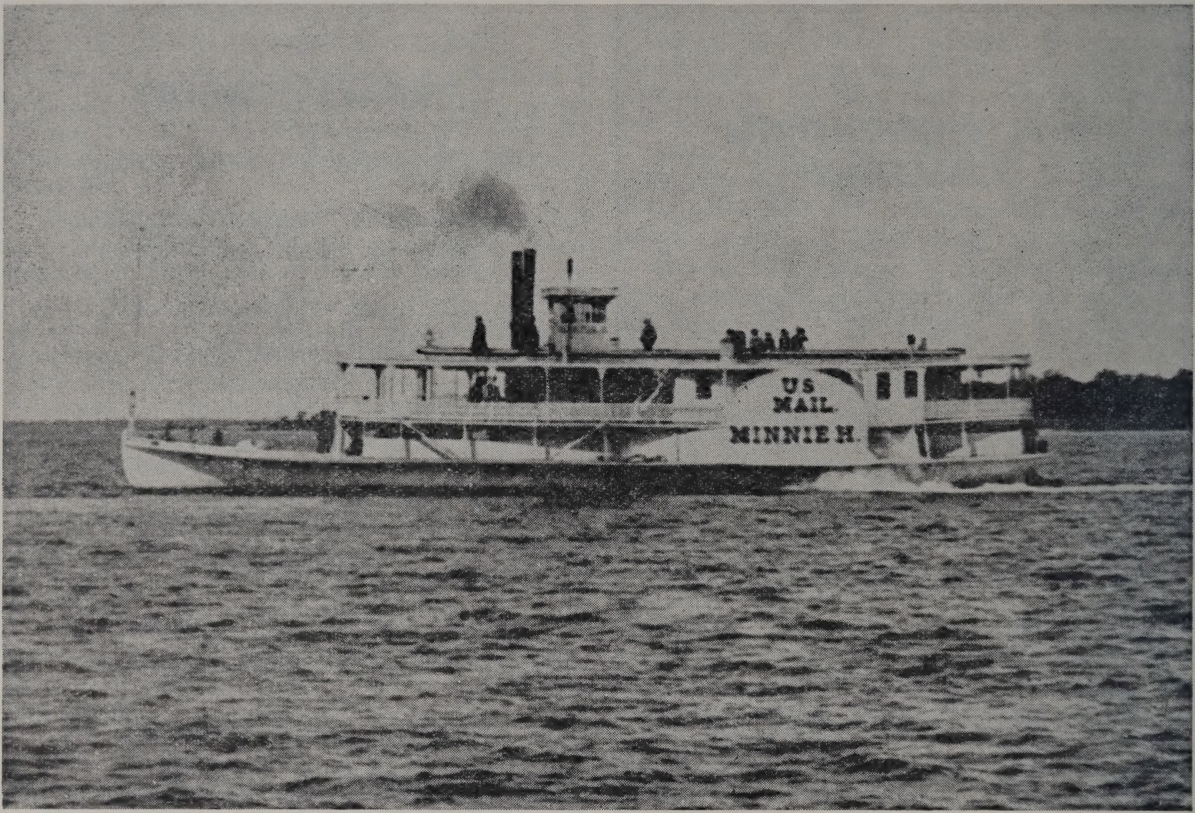

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The Story of the Steamer "Minnie H"

CAPTAIN E. E. HEERMAN, Owner and Operator

By Heerman J. Naugle

The story of the "Minnie H" properly starts with the birth of her owner and operator. Edward Edson Heerman was born in Salem Pond, Orleans County, Vermont, April 18, 1834. His parents were farm people and, as were most farmers of that day, they were self-sufficient on their farm. They raised their own sheep, carded and spun the wool into thread, and wove it into cloth. Raising their own food, making their clothes, shoes, and many of their utensils and tools developed self reliance and initiative in the children.

While Captain Heerman was yet a young boy, the family moved to Pennsylvania, and later to Iowa, settling near what is now Burlington. From this home, at the age of sixteen, Captain Heerman started out on his own. Carrying all of his worldly possessions in a small bundle and with but a few cents in his pocket, he started for the shores of the Mississippi River, for he had decided to seek his fortune on the river.

At the age of nineteen, he was in command of his own steamboat on the river, the first of a fleet of thirteen steamboats which he owned and operated on the Mississippi and Chippewa Rivers. Almost all of his boats were named in one way or another for his only daughter, Minnietta Heerman, later Mrs. Minnie H. Naugle of Devils Lake, North Dakota. For nearly thirty years his business prospered. Then progress brought the railroads into the transportation picture, and their entry spelled doom for the river traffic.

An opportunity to bid on transporting a load of freight to Fort Benton, Montana, opened up, and thinking of the possibility of finding a new location to transfer his steamboat activities, Captain Heerman made what became the successful bid for the contract. On April 27, 1880, he sailed from St. Paul down the Mississippi River to St. Louis, then up the Missouri River to Fort Benton, Montana. He arrived there with his load of freight on July 4, 1880—a distance of nearly 4,200 miles. This was the longest continuous trip ever made on inland waters by steamboat.

The trip did not result in finding a new location, however, and the Captain returned to his operations on the Mississippi and Chippewa Rivers, until in 1882 he made a trip to Devils Lake, Dakota territory. This was his second trip into Dakota, as in 1858 he and five associ-

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ates had become interested in steamboat navigation on the Red River, and had established a townsite called East Burlington, seven miles south of Fargo. During the Indian massacre of 1862 the settlement was burned and wiped out.

In the meantime, the coming of the railroads was the beginning of the end of steamboat passenger traffic on the Mississippi. "On July 16, 1882, commercial steamboating on the Chippewa was a thing of the past," Captain Heerman wrote in his memoirs. Continuing his search for a new location, Captain Heerman, then forty-eight years old, came to the lake region when it was practically a wilderness, arriving at Odessa on November 3, 1882. The following story of the building of the "Minnie H" is taken in part from Captain Heerman's own memoirs and bears the title "Tales of Hardships".

"There was a stopping place at Odessa at the eastern end of the lake. Plenty of town lots were available. The lake had been partly frozen out from the shore, and the ice was about four inches thick, I think. The next day, I came further up the lake, where a town called Devils Lake City had been laid out, about one mile north of the lake, and about two miles east of where the city of Devils Lake is now situated.

On November 5, the snow all disappeared. I spent five days in all at the lake. Devils Lake was a beautiful body of water fringed with timber, and the locality was dotted with other beautiful lakes. I examined the soil and believed I had found an empire of undeveloped resources. The shores generally were not far from the timber line, and the lake extended nearly to where the depot of the city of Devils Lake now is. On November 8 I returned to my home at Reads Landing, Minnesota, sold everything I had; and on the twenty-seventh of November, made a contract for the making of the frame of the steamer "Minnie H," to be operated on Devils Lake.

"There was at that time not many settlers near the lake, but there were a number of townsites. The Dana and Simmeral families had claims southeast of Devils Lake City, on the lakeshore. Major Benham ran the hotel at Devils Lake City. Creelsburg was prospective; Colonel Creel and Colonel Uline were there. George Moore and Frank Pitcher had claims near town. Major Stansbury was here. The Pools, the LaRues, Mr. Lafe Palmer, and Captain Jesse Palmer had claims in the timber on Rock Island. Three companies, I think, were stationed at Fort Totten, on the south sides of the lake, with Colonel Conrad in command. Frank Palmer was Indian Store-

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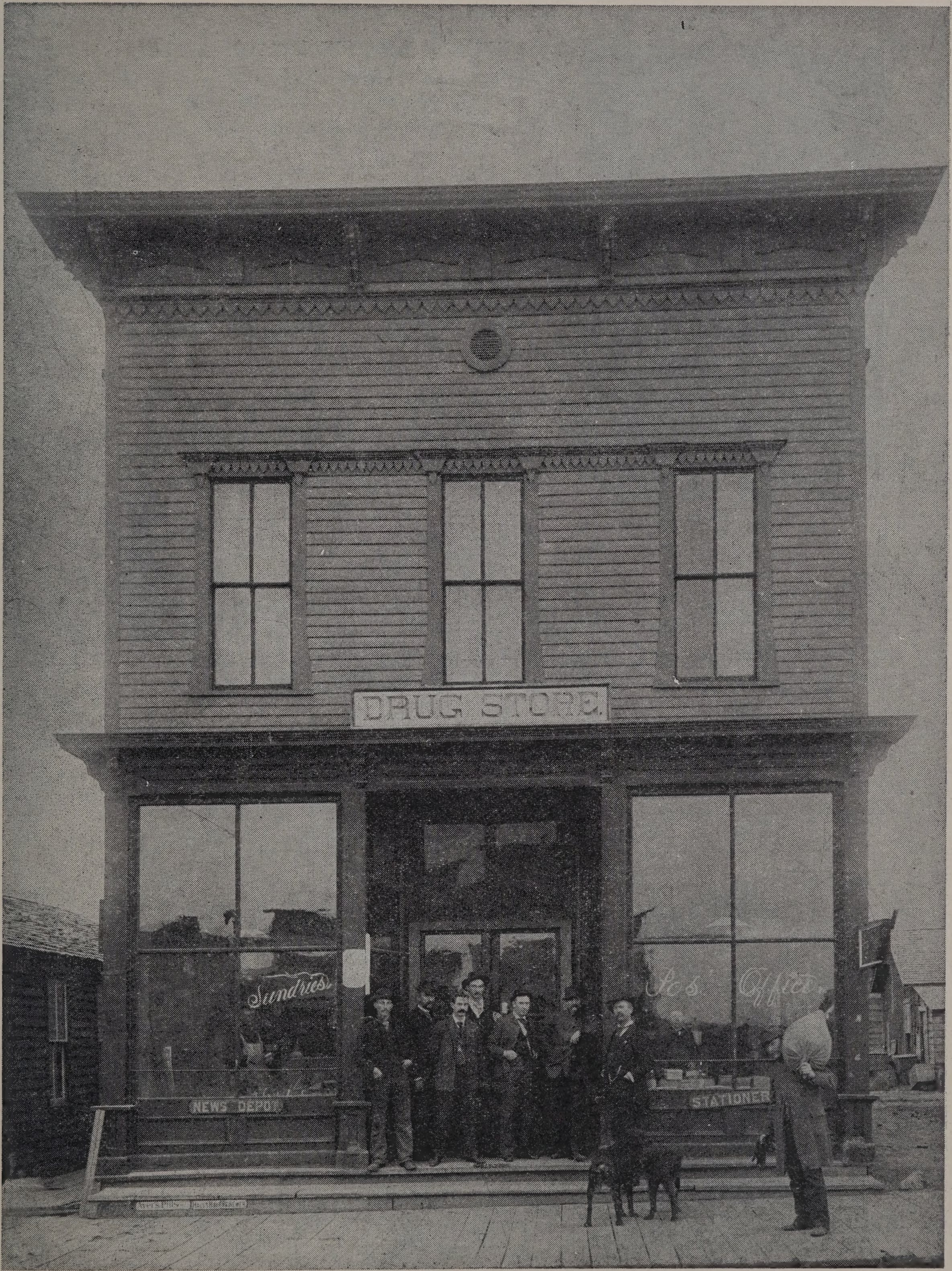
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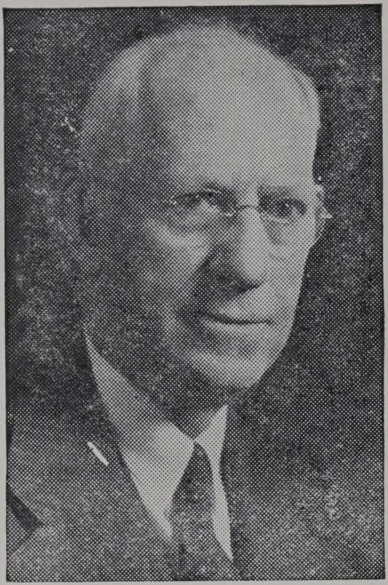
Early post office in Devils Lake, on site now occupied by medical offices of Drs. Mahoney, Lazareck, and Longmire.



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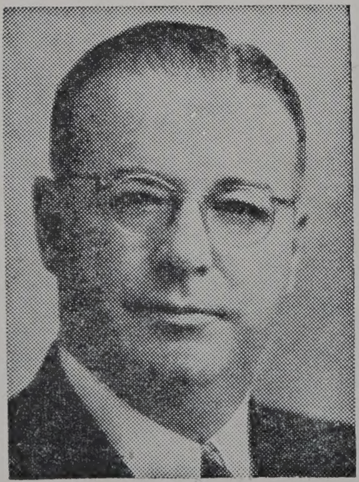

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keeper, and Mr. Peck was post trader. Many others could be added if I could think of their names. There was quite a strife about a townsite for the lake. Nothing was settled until Mr. J. J. Hill came out in the winter, some time I think, in February 1883.

"I remained in Minnesota until everything was underway. My first shipments of boat materials were made in November 1882. The total registered fourteen carloads. At that time the end of track was beyond Larimore, and the railroad construction company was pushing grade on to Bartlett.

"The first three carloads to arrive at Larimore contained the machinery and the sawmill. We left Larimore, December 12, 1882, in a snowstorm, attempting to get the first three carloads on to Bartlett. We had to shovel snow all night to keep the engine alive. I lost an overshoe and had town men shovel in my place at $1.00 an hour. The engine had to go back for a snow plow, which came from Grand Forks. I walked on to the end of the track, hungry, on the night of December 16, reaching Osburn's for the night. The engine got to the end of the track at the same time. Five days were consumed in moving the train from Larimore to Bartlett.

"The construction crew pulled off, and the eleven remaining carloads were left at Larimore, which was thirty-five or forty miles from where I built the Steamer "Minnie H". All of this material was hauled later by team, at great expense, to the boatyard, in what is now Lakewood on the shores of Devils Lake. The first ton of hay I bought cost $45.00!; oats were $1.00 per bushel; other things were in proportion.

"After getting the three cars to Bartlett, I improvised a storage place and commenced to haul. Great quantities of snow fell. There were no defined roads; we just drove out over the great prairie, and we made slow progress getting to the lake.

"Purchasing a claim, I commenced to build a living place on the banks of the lake. I must say that was the coldest job I ever got into. The wind blew a gale neary every day, making it very hard and dreary. At times in building, it took three men to fasten on a board; one to hold the board, one to hold the nail, and one to pound the nail. . The snow drifted, piling up in great drifts, and making it almost impossible to do much. We finally had a place to get into, and that was a happy night. We all suffered great hardships, more than most folks will ever know. I was here two months without one letter getting through from home.

"On January 13, at Bartlett, we loaded the Minnie H boiler which had been built in Cincinnati and shipped here entirely new. January

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15, we started out with the boiler. We increased our horsepower to nine span of horses, and used sticks under the runners. For the first two days we made a distance of ten miles, and the teams had to scatter over the prairie for shelter or stable room. Many teams gave out. * * * One evening I guided the teams in the dark until we got to Steven's. The little home was already crowded, but they made room for us. The horses were crowded into the barn. During the night the wind blew so hard through the tiny cracks and crevices in the barn, that by morning the snow had drifted three feet deep inside.

"The Pat Murphys took us in one night and sheltered us. Two teams turned back, and only three were left. On January 17, we arrived at Rock Island, but without the boiler; we found it impossible to haul it in the deep snow and drifts. I then built a big stone boat, that would not turn over in the big drifts. The result of this was that the teams could not pull it that way. I was finally able to procure a pair of logging sleds. I transferred the load into the big sleds, and I finally found four teams sufficient to haul it to the place of building. We arrived there January 23, consuming eleven days in removing the boiler twenty miles by team.

"On one of these days of hardship the thermometer at the Fort was said to register fifty degrees below zero. I wish to add right here that while I have seen lots of hard winters, this was the worst that I ever experienced.

"It took most of the winter to haul all of the carloads left at Larimore. We would unload the material the best we could, and on our return would not find it until we had shoveled it out of the snow. One sled load was never found. I waited and picked my time, and did much better with the rest of the material than I had with the boiler.

"I soon had the sawmill in operation. Everything sawed in the shape of slab or board was soon carried off. The most of my good building lumber was shipped in from the Chippewa River country, but some of the shorter lengths I found in the timber here. I sold a lot of lumber for claim shacks. We sawed all day, but at night there were no boards for anyone, although people were standing around wanting lumber. I found the sawmill a great convenience in building a steamboat in such a country as this was then, only a great prairie wilderness, opened to white settlement just one year previous, in 1881.

"About the twenty-ninth of January, we had a living place where we could cook and eat and sleep. It seemed very much different. We could then accomplish something more satisfactory.

"I had procured a good crew of caulkers from Milwaukee, and ship carpenters from

COMPLIMENTS OF

THE RAMSEY COUNTY ABSTRACT COMPANY

Alex Elmslie, Secretary

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Goodman Farm Electric

220 Fourth Street Phone 111

Minnesota. The Minnie H was finished in the late spring of 1883. Her dimensions were 110 feet over all; beam 20 feet 6 inches; depth, 8 feet at the bow, and 7½ feet at the stern; 150 ton burden; and she drew 3½ feet of water. She could and did accommodate freight, U. S. mail, and passengers from Devils Lake to all points on the lake. She made two successful trial trips on July 2 and 3, 1883.

"From the commencement of the building of the steamer, one might say in advance of any settlement, the newspapers and the railroads did their part to boost the settlement along.

"These were the hardships of my first settlement in Devils Lake. As I said before, this was a wilderness, and I was sinking $35,000 in it. The boats were one of the best things for this country. The railroad had been extended to Devils Lake, and a fine dock built not far from the depot at Devils Lake, with a railroad track out to and alongside the steamboats, so that freight could be unloaded from the cars to the boats. A fine dock was also built at Minnewaukan, where the Northern Pacific connected at the other end of the lake.

"The first passenger train (on what is now the Great Northern Railroad) met the Minnie H on the Fourth of July 1883, and brought an excursion including railroad men, editors, and commercial men from points in Dakota Territory and from St. Paul. They had a fine day and a fine trip which was enjoyed by all on board. Mr. Brown of the St. Paul firm of Brown and Tracy was on board. The fact that this was a new country to be settled made it more enjoyable than it would have been otherwsie. Many a good write-up for the lake and the country came out of that trip. Many similar trips were made later on in the same interest, to bring people into this new wilderness.

"For nearly thirty years I kept a record of the lake's water level. With the exception of a few years, the water level steadily fell. In the fall of 1889 the boats made their last trip into Devils. Lake. The water had receded so much that the boats thereafter had to land at the narrows of the bay, about one and one half miles from Devils Lake, and were never able to get back to town again.

"The boats had done quite a business. Realizing the loss of water and landing, I undertook to see if it was not possible to turn the Mouse and Sheyenne Rivers into Devils Lake in order to save the lake. A preliminary survey was made later, but because there was not sufficient business to justify the expense the matter was dropped."

The time card for the Minnie H states here scheduled trips were as follows:

Leave Devils Lake, for Fort Totten, daily at 9:00 A. M.

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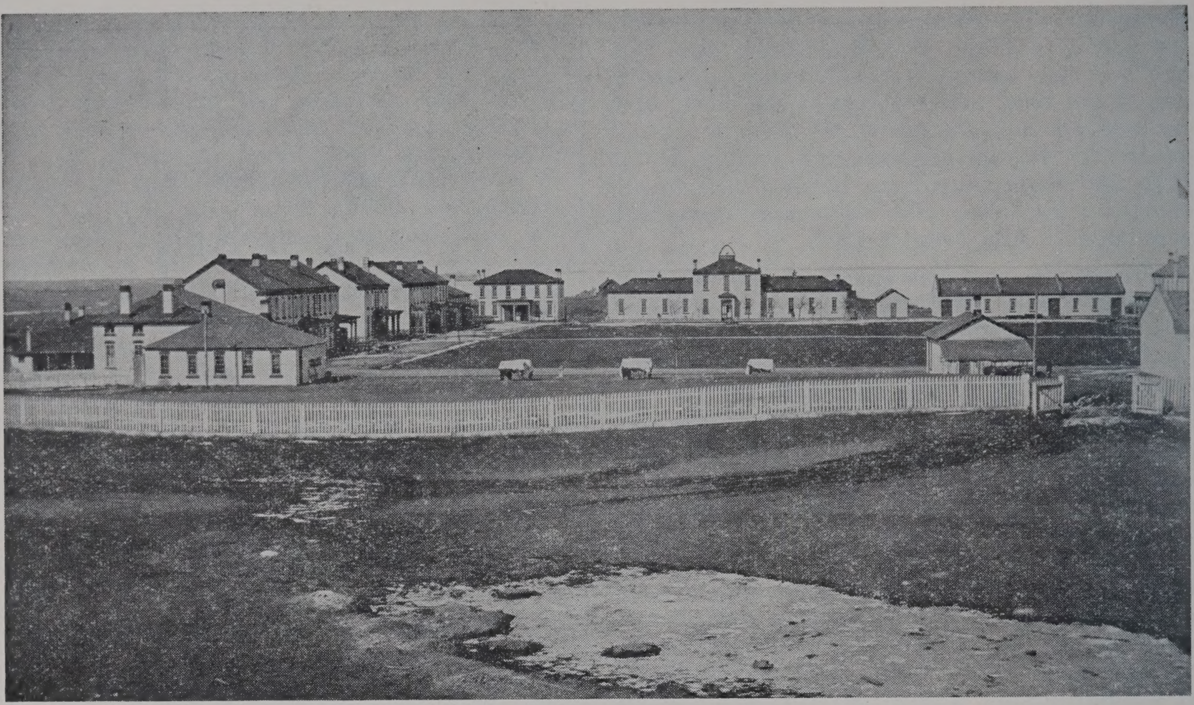

Fort Totten, showing Officers' Quarters, Hospital, Magazine, and Quartermasters Store. Photo taken in 1878;—note height of lake in background.

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Returning—Leave Minnewaukan for Devils Lake at 4:00 A. M. Wednesday, Fridays and Sundays.

For years, during the two weeks of Chautauqua Season, she often carried as much as 1,400 tons of freight and 3,000 passengers to Fort Totten and other points of interest on the lake. Over a period of many years Captain Heerman held exclusively the mail contract to Fort Totten. Later two other boats, the Rock Island, and the Maria Theresa, were added to handle the traffic. In addition to the regular schedule many excursions were made, some gratuitous, in the interest of various organizations. Such were the Devils Lake Cornet Band excursions of May 31, 1885, and August 25, 1885, and for the benefit of the M. E. Church, August 13, 1885, to name just a few.

Many important personages visiting this area traveled on the Minnie H. When General William Tecumseh Sherman came to visit Fort Totten in August of 1884, he, his two daughters, and several friends traveled from Devils Lake to Fort Totten on the Minnie H.

The Minnie H. was in operation on Devils Lake every summer from July 4, 1883, until the fall of 1908. The water level of the lake dropped steadily during this time with a corresponding decrease in the volume of business. In the spring of 1909, because of low water level and small income from passenger traffic, Captain Heerman, after careful consideration, decided to leave the boats permanently in dry dock. The process of dismantling them then began. The pilot house of the Minnie H was moved to the yard of his home in Devils Lake, where it provided a fine playhouse for his grandchildren, and in later years for his great grandchildren. The flagstaff was placed in the yard in front of the house, where it stood many years. At present it is in the yard of the Pioneer Daughters Museum Cabins at Fort Totten. The pilot wheel is in the State Historical Society Building in Bismarck. The whistle is still in use, and blows many times a day, from the State School for the Deaf in Devils Lake. Most of the wood of the rudder has been made into gavels. Of special historical interest is the fact that this rudder was made of native North Dakota oak. The reason for this was that the sled load of materials which was lost and never recovered had contained

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on your 75th anniversary

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419 Third Street **Phone 495**

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"Be jolly with Tolly by golly"

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Congratulates Devils Lake on its
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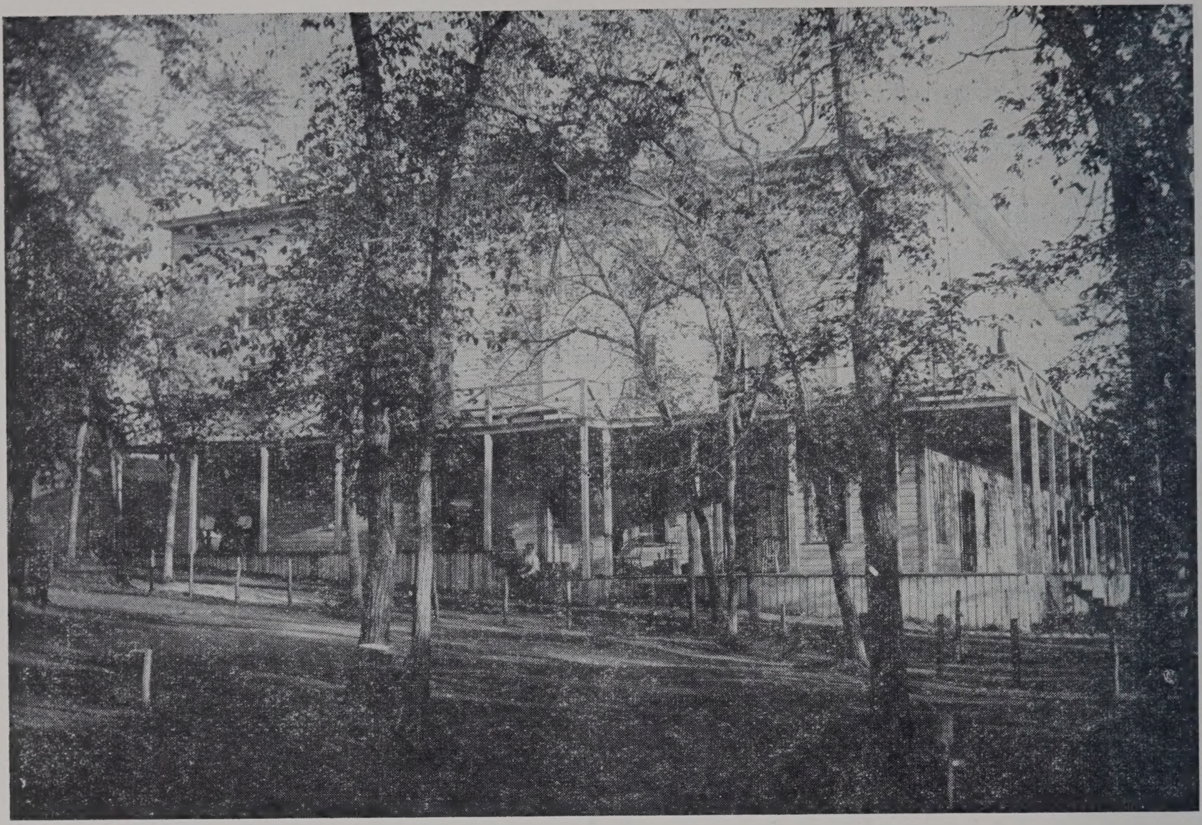

Hotel on Chautauqua grounds

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One Hour Service

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Compliments of

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Devils Lake, N. Dak.

the lumber for the rudder. So, since it was lost, Captain Heerman went into the woods at what is now Lakewood and selected a native oak tree from which he fashioned timbers for the rudder. And from this rudder of native oak—many years later—Captain Heerman had a gavel made, to be presented to the first native North Dakotan to be elected Governor of North Dakota, Governor George Shafer. In the Governor's Mansion at Camp Grafton are furnishings made in part or in full from timbers taken from the hull of the Minnie H.

Diversion of river water into Devils Lake was a project concevied by Captain Heerman when first the water level began to fall. In his later years, the 1920's, with the revival of interest in this project, Captain Heerman had gavels made out of this same native oak rudder, and through the kind efforts of Sivert W. Thompson of Devils Lake, had them presented to the President of the United States, and to the Speakers of the House and the Senate. In December 1956 a gavel was presented to retiring Governor Norman Brunsdale at a banquet in Devils Lake, honoring him for his work in furthering water conservation and diversion in North Dakota.

Captain Heerman passed away in October, 1929, at the age of 95. It was indeed a satisfaction to him that his boats attracted tourists and settlers, helped them find locations, provided many of them with means of earning a living, and were a great aid in opening up the Lake Region to settlement. In a total of fifty-nine years of steamboating, Captain Heerman's record shows no serious injury to passengers, and not one loss of life. His story is one of hardship and endurance, ingenuity and skill, courage and faith; it exemplifies the type of man that settled this country and helped immeasurably to make it what it is today.

Population Trends

	North Dakota	Ramsey County	Devils Lake
1870	2,405		846
1880	36,000		
1890	182,000	4,418	846
1900	319,000	9,198	1,729
1910	577,000	15,199	5,159
1920	641,000	15,070	5,140
1930	680,845	16,525	5,519
1940	641,935	15,626	6,204
1950	619,636	14,373	6,427
1957		(estimate)	7,500

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Harland Pederson, Cons.

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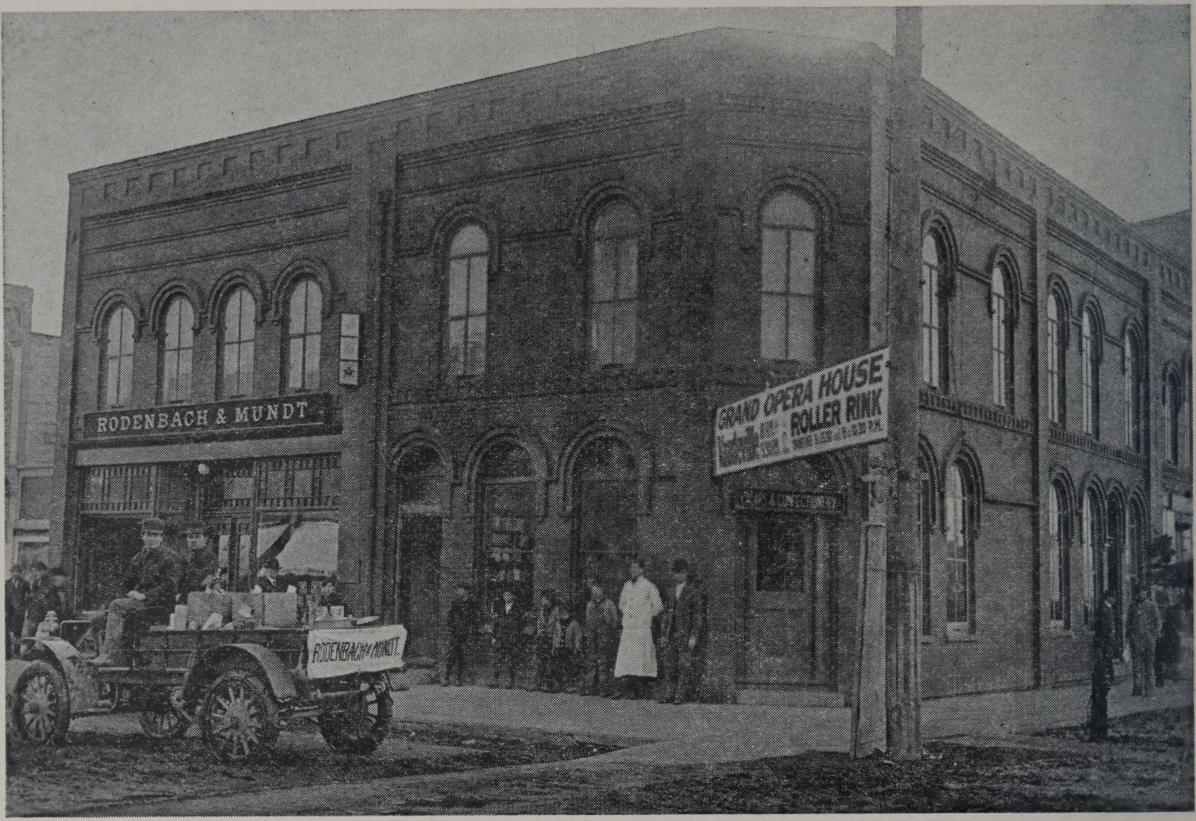
RODENBACH & MUNDT
GRAND OPERA HOUSE
ROLLER RINK
RODENBACH & MUNDT

Buildings at corner of Fifth Street and Fourth Avenue—former J. C. Penney Corner. Masonic Hall located upstairs.

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Fourth Street at Third Avenue
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Devils Lake, N. Dak.

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Devils Lake, N. Dak.

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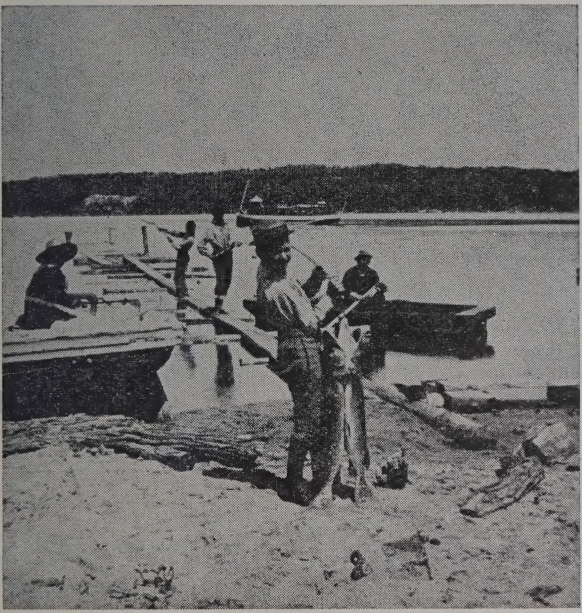
CHRIST KENNER — Vice President
RICHARD LEE — Secretary
CLARENCE ADAHL — Director
JOE ZIEGLER, JR — Director
LOUIS SETTER — Manager and Treasurer

Fishing

"Shipping bill delivered to St. Paul, Minnesota and Manitoba Railway Company at the Devils Lakee station March 20, 1886, consigned to S. H. Baker, Grand Forks, Dakota Territory: one sack fish, weight 100 lbs. C. L. Budde, Shipper."

March 18, 1886, to Gilbert Brothers, Grand Forks, Dakota Territory, four sacks fish, weight 300 lbs. C. L. Budde, Shipper.

March 20, 1886, consigned to M & D, Park River, Dakota Territory, two sacks of fish, weight 175 lbs. Moose & Dodd, shipper."



Fish taken from Devils Lake in early 1880's.

In the winter of 1883, W. L. Sheely, pioneer fisherman, estimated that he had caught and shipped in excess of 10,000 lbs. of fish in four months. The fish were pickerel and reached enormous size. During the winter months they could be seen piled up like cord wood in towns throughout the area.

In 1956 a successful planting of northern pike was made in the partially restored waters of Devils Lake, and with subsequent plantings made in 1957, prospects are bright for the reestablishment of fish life in the lake.

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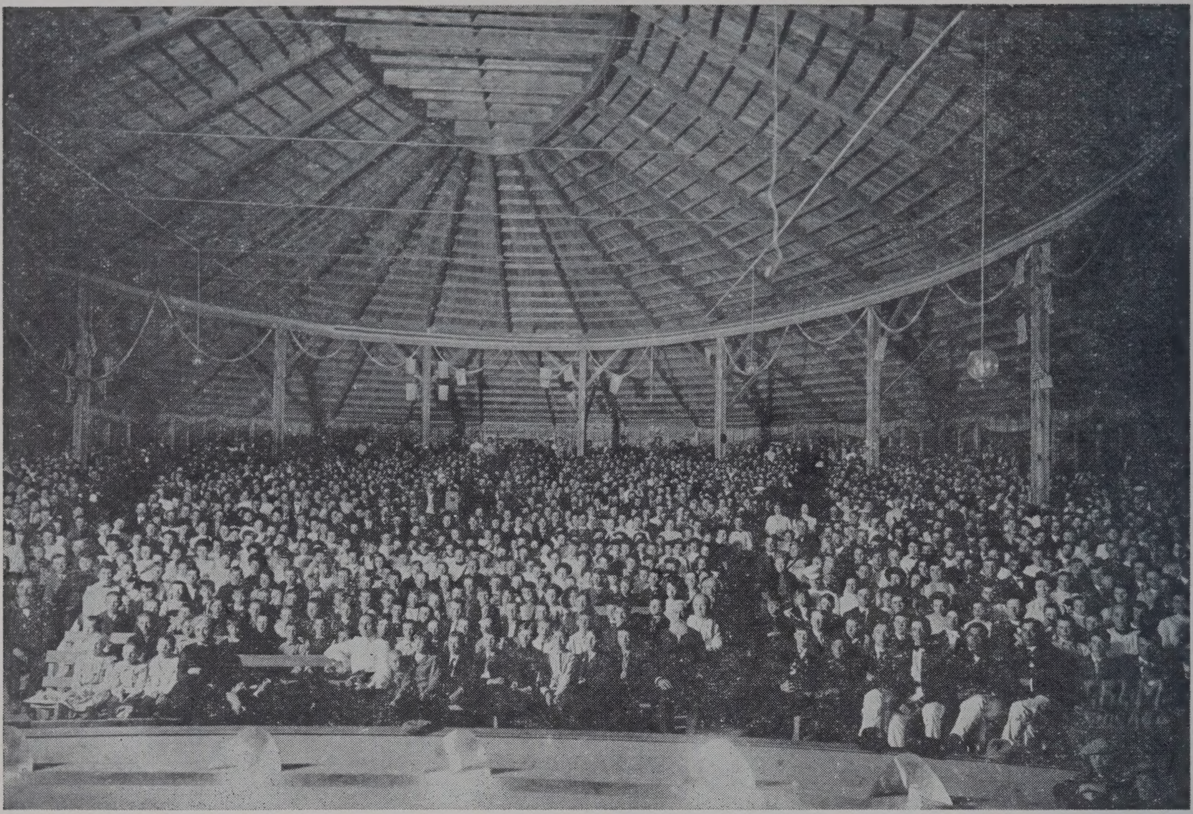

Interior view from stage of Chautauqua Auditorium, showing audience.

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Flowers for Every Occasion

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on their Seventy-fifth Anniversary

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Visit our Luxurious Bar and

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318 Fourth Street

Recollections of Early Days in Devils Lake

By C. G. COCKBURN

The years have gone and it is with a rather surprised feeling that one can recall events that happened in Devils Lake fifty or sixty years ago. One of my earliest recollections and the first event I can remember is a prairie fire lighting the night sky north of Devils Lake, bearing down on the town through what was then known as Maher's pasture, north of the high school. The year was 1895.

All able bodied men in the town gathered gunny sacks, wet them and started north to fight the fire. My father was among these and I can plainly recall mother's agitation and fear that he might not return. The fire was brought under control, father returned and the town returned to normalcy. The fires in those days were not confined to the prairies and the fire protection for the town was skimpy. In the downtown section, cisterns were dug at the intersections of the streets and filled with water.

The most spectacular fire I can recall was the night the Tower House, a hotel located a block west of the present Western Hotel, burned. It was a wooden structure and there was no hope of saving it. The sparks blew into the mill across the street and it burned. In those days the only fire protection was a hand pump with handles the length of the pump. The suction hose was placed in the cistern at the street intersection at Mann's store as now located and about fifteen men manned the pump. I could just barely reach the handle when it reached the top of the stroke, but for some reason was not kicked off. The Tower House, incidentally, was owned by Mr. Patee, the father of Mrs. Dick Dailey, so long the postmaster at Devils Lake.

In those days just about everyone owned a cow and there was the town herd run by a boy by the name of Parsons. He, and other boys whose help he would enlist would take the cows out and pasture them near the School for the Deaf during the day and then at night they would be driven in up the alleys and tied up. It was fun to go out and help in this operation, although I don't recall that there was any money paid for the assistance.

A. E. Hodgkinson, a dapper fellow, ran the drug store, located where the New York Store now stands. He was a horse fancier and had a smart get-up of horse and buggy, and used to drive down the street in style. Later C. W.

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Nash Sales and Service

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Devils Lake, N. Dak.

The 313 Club

and

Suburban Supper Club

Fine Foods and Liquors

Dancing

2 miles east of Devils Lake

on Highway 2

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Greene started a drug store which was the hangout of the baseball players. Devils Lake had a first class team, with Perry Sessions the prize pitcher. Of course the boys were "hot" for baseball, too, but lacked the money to buy balls. Some of the baseball players were not averse to making an extra bit of money and would sell balls at the back door of Greene's drug store for a price that we could afford. One of the hitches that occurred in our neighborhood was the lack of players to play three ole cat, which required three players and a batter. Albert Kilday, Herman Huesgen, Ferdinand DiFiore and myself played, but Albert (Lardy) would occasionally want to show his power and would not play in spite of our pleadings.

It was the day of P. J. McClory, Ole Serumgard, Siver Serumgard, Sam Small, John Dailey, Dick Daely, Ally Bond, C. W. Greene, Mr. Holbrook of the New York Store, I. Glerum, Ever Wagness, the sheriff, Frank Whitman, of the Sevilla Hotel, Fred Cox, Fred Mann, Sr., Clarence Haley, John Cowan, judge, Mr. Duell, and the long line of people that now rest in the place northeast of town. It was a saddening experience a couple of years ago to go to the cemetery and see the names on the tombstones of those who were a part of my life as a boy.

I used to accompany my father on long buggy trips through the country on cattle buying expeditions. Many times we would be driving home late at night from one of these trips, singing as the horses clopped, clopped along. One of the favorites was "Good Night, Ladies." One trip was into the territory where Edmore now stands. At that time there was nothing but prairie in that district and I can recall driving for miles over virgin prairie until we reached the ranch of a cattle raiser. We arrived home very late that night.

One of the activities of my father was an effort to put a dirt bridge across the Narrows to the reservation. There were years of discouraging effort with the bridge washing out. Capt. Heerman demanded that a draw bridge should be placed in the center of the bridge to allow the Minnie H. to go through to the east bay. This was done and he tried it once, bumped the back end of the Minnie H. against the sides and didn't try it again. Then there was the negotiation with the Indians about permitting the bridge to be built. I accompanied my father on a number of meetings with these councils of Indians. Generally the only white men present were my father, the Indian agent and myself. Every Indian was an orator. They were feasting occasions and a big iron kettle of meat was cooked, and everyone helped themselves out of the pot.

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Devils Lake, N. Dak.

421 Second Street **Phone 8**

Each summer was filled with two exciting weeks, the weeks of Chautauqua. The big auditorium was built, a big hotel was built, Mann's store was started. The exciting part was the camping out. Tent platforms were rented and tents erected and half the population of the Lake District flocked in to enjoy the fun. There were the wonderful programs in the auditorium, the swimming, and the top of all thrills, a ride on the big Minnie H. with Captain Heerman with his long beard at the wheel. Mr. Oliver helped him run a smaller boat, the name of which I can't recall, but regular trips were made to Fort Totten. It was also a great experience for a small boy to ride on the railroad with Capt. Ford as engineer. I can still vividly recall a fast ride (or so it seemed to me) with the breeze blowing through the open cars as we clicked along.

The day of all days at Chautauqua was the day the great William Jennings Bryan gave an oration in the auditorium. I worked in the check room in the hotel that day and the jam was terrific, with baggage piled to the ceiling. I can't recall how we managed to keep track of anything, but remember that at the day's end the floor was covered with beer. It should not have been, for North Dakota was a prohibition state, but there it was. What a jam that night as everyone rushed for the train and the train had to make a number of trips before the crowd finally got to Devils Lake. Bill Reed ran the restaurant in those days both in Devils Lake and at Chautauqua and you got a good meal for 25 cents. I can remember what a complaint there was when the lunch room near the depot raised their prices to 35 cents.

Improvements came to Devils Lake, too. In the early days, there were the lamps. In the parlor there were the big, ornate lamps with glass prisms dangling from a frame set away from the lamp. Then came electricity by the way of a Mr. Tompkins, I believe his name was, whose electric plant was built where the Gilbertson Funeral Parlor is today. The lights were pretty dim affairs, but there was no longer the necessity to clean wicks and chimneys. All you had to do was turn them on and there was light.

About the same time telephones were installed, some time before 1900 I believe. The switchboard was located in the front of the power house and the boys used to watch the operator work, fascinated by this new magic. Later, A. B. Kerlin came to town and built a new power house near the artesian well. Shortly after this that impractical thing called an automobile began to appear. A. B. Kerlin

GREETINGS FROM

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company

Devils Lake, N. Dak

Coca-Cola **Mason's Root Beer**

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"76" **Squirt**

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THE CITY OF DEVILS LAKE

was 10 years old when we opened our doors to serve the banking needs of the Lake Region.

Here is the record of our growth:

	Total deposits
1892	Start
1901	$113,192.00
1918	$813,020.00
1935	$1,162,847.00
1957	**$5,901,443.00**

Hats off to the City on this her 75th birthday.

We are happy to have grown with the City during the past 65 years.

●

Ramsey National Bank

"The Friendly Bank"

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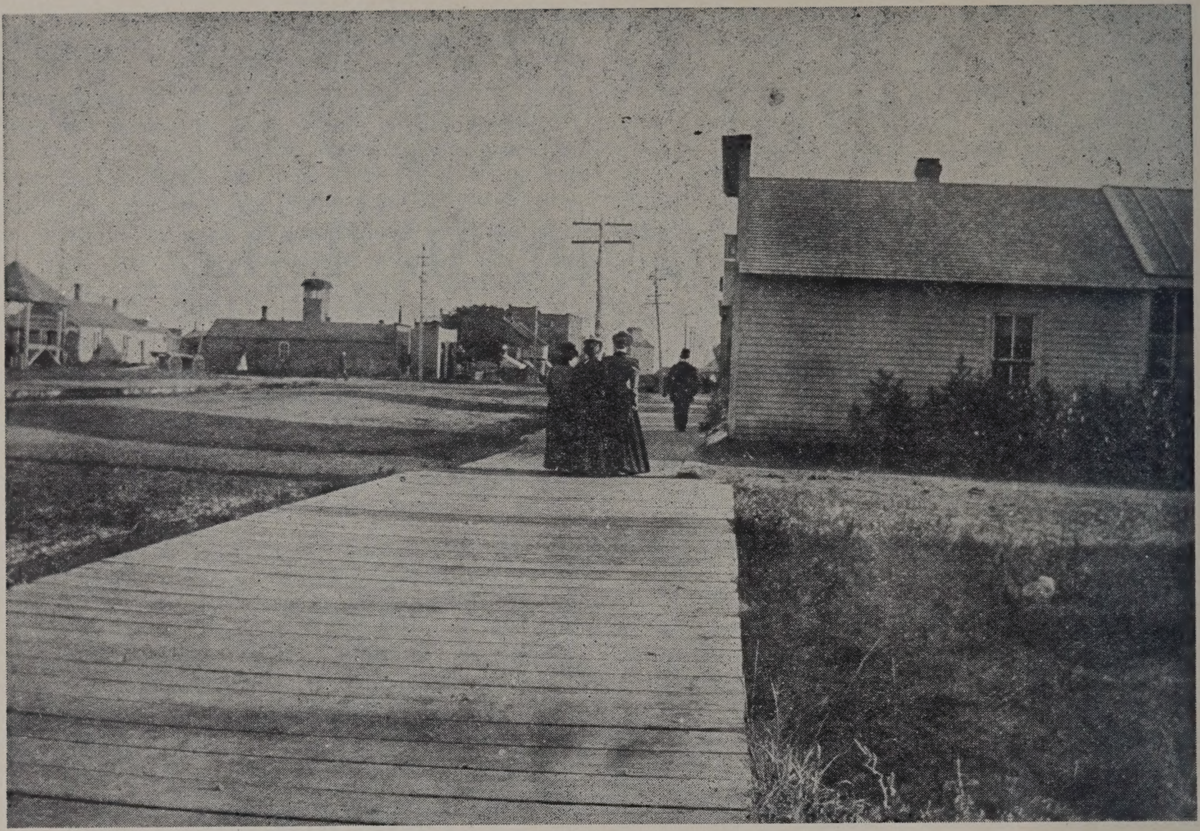

Looking south on Fourth Avenue from the Hotel Sevilla (Grayson) — about 1900.

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The John Deere Store

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Store Fronts Fishing Tackle

Glass Block Church Windows

"large enough to serve you—
small enough to want to"

owned one of the first ones, and as he had difficulty keeping the engine cool, installed a large radiator on the front. I remember as a boy watching a mechanic working with this car on the lot where the Memorial Building stands. He said, "Son, some day you will see these things as big as passenger cars." His prophecy is not far from coming true.

Frank Prosser was one of the first car owners. He drove what I believe was called a Rambler, with a handle steering device. Later came the de luxe cars. Emil Eich, the county auditor, bought a Cadillac that was the talk of the town. You started the engine from a crank on the side of the car. The entrance to the back seat was by way of a door in the center of the back. L. B. Fancher, the superintendent (county) of schools, purchased a buckboard type of automobile, with the engine openly at the back over the axle. One day he was attempting to get the engine started in the alley behind his home, with a bunch of boys as very interested spectators. Suddenly the motor started. He jumped into the seat, failed to miss a manure pile, almost tipped over, and went careening down the alley.

Then came the day of the self-starter. Mr. Horton, the owner of the Cadillac agency demonstrated it by running the car up Fourth Avenue operated by the starter only.

The automobiles were a frightening contraption to the horses and any ride in the country was a succession of stops to wait until the farmer got out and held his horses by their bridles until the terrifying thing had passed. When this wasn't done, the horse usually took off across the country in a wild plunge. My first ride was with one of the Tomlinson boys who ran the bicycle shop in the block west of the post office. They had a Cadillac one lunger and we went for a ride to the deaf school at a speed of 25 miles an hour. No horses in front! It was a new experience.

Another thing that came into our lives was the motion picture. They were displayed in Wineman's Opera House, above Glickson's Store. At the back of the Opera House bleachers were erected. The first picture I recall having seen was the picture of President McKinley's funeral. It was raining and there was a sea of umbrellas. In the middle of the showing, one section of the bleachers gave way and crashed to the floor, but no one was hurt. This opera house was used for the traveling shows that come to town. One of the troups was called Sanford's and they came every year, putting on a different show every night for a week.

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Appliances

Phone 604

DEVILS LAKE AGSCO

AGSCO STEEL BUILDINGS

SEED — FERTILIZER

223 Fifth Avenue South

Phone 1390

The phonograph made its appearance about this time. The first one was shown at Chautauqua and for five cents you could put a tube in your ear and hear a wonderful Edison record, the record being a tubular shaped affair.

In those days one of the residents of Devils Lake was Ella Euline. She was a notary public, stenographer, real estate agent, etc. She was the talk of the town. She smoked! Well, Ella, you wouldn't create a sensation today.

The memories of the old timers are many. There comes H. M. Creel down the street, walking with West Point straightness. Siver Serumgard walking to the office with his cane expertly tapping before him and searching for the edge of the curb as he crosses the street. H. E. Baird and my father sitting visiting on a warm summer evening on the back steps of the bank. I approach with my little gilt bank and tell Mr. Baird I want to start a savings account. The year is 1895. He takes me inside and gives me a savings book and the account, No. 22, is still there. He teases me every time I deposit a dollar by saying, "Here comes my cigar money." I am bothered and worried for several years. Ollie Rawson cuts my hair in a little shop a few doors north of Moran's Drug Store. There's Mr. Stade and Mr. Svee. My father smiling when Mr. Stade tells him about a trip to a mine he is interested in on Mt. Rainier and saying, "The scenery is yust majestic." Ole Berg, for many years a clerk in State & Svee's store and later in Holbrook's Store, a great favorite with the Norwegians.

George Elmslie, so many years Register of Deeds. Tom Thorson, clerk of court. Ever Wagness, sheriff and father of two boys, Tom and Paul, with whom we played around the jail. Edgar LaRue, an energetic man, who ran Chautauqua for so many years. Fred P. Mann, tall and with a quiet sense of humor, who gave me one of my first jobs, taking the sprouts off potatoes in the store's basement. Fred Craft, a great hunter whom they called Doc for some reason or other, probably because he concocted a cure for poison ivy. The memories of years of annual bouts with poison ivy!

Time moved along. In 1904 a young fellow came to school from the country. We "city" slickers smiled for he was so big and awkward. But we didn't smile long for we soon found out that he was smarter than any of us. His name was Clyde Duffy. Perhaps you may have heard of him. We graduated in 1908 and there were six boys in the class, Dr. Tom McLean, John Nugent Burke, now head of the British Columbia Lumbermen's association, Vancouver, B. C. A Leo Nelson, now assistant general storekeeper of the Great Northern with head-

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ON ITS

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Northwest's Leading Brand-Names
Lumber Dealer

P. J. KAVANAUGH, Manager

Hats off to the Pioneers
and a Salute to the Future

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quarters in St. Paul; Rudy Lake of Devils Lake, now retired, Howard Maher, and myself. Next year will be the 50th anniversary of our graduation.

About this time the Devils Lake Yacht and Boat Club was formed and practically all the young fellows in town joined, and put up the money for the purchase of five dories from Massachusetts. Dr. Pierce helped with the organization and the purchase, as he had lived in the East. There was a long wait but finally the boats arrived. On the first evening, all of the boats were taken out although none of us knew anything about sailing. Of course one of the boats tipped over, but it was on the far side of the bay and the boys managed to get to shore. As it was dusk, no one on the Chautauqua side saw it and the accident was kept a secret for fear it would ruin the chances for a successful club. Everyone blossomed out in white pants, a club house was built and for several years it was the center of activities. Sailing was fun and it continues to be in these later years on our lake.

In spite of forty years' absence from Devils Lake, a part of my heart remains there and part of my interest. During these forty years, I pick up the Devils Lake paper when it arrives and watch for familiar names (now few) and good news (the lake is up to the level of those early years, and may they sail again).

DEVILS LAKERS WHO WERE PROMINENT IN STATE AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Henry C. Hansboro—newspaperman—editor of the "Inter-Ocean" Served in the Congress of the United States from 1889 to 1891. Served in the United States Senate ofr 1891 to 1909.

E. C. D. Shortridge served as Governor of the State of North Dakota from 1893 to 1894 and moved to Devils Lake after being Governor and worked as a clerk in the Devils Lake Land Office for many years.

John Cowan—attorney. Served as Attorney General for the State of North Dakota from 1895 to 1900.

David E. Morgan—attorney. Served on the Supreme Court of North Dakota from 1901 to 1911.

John Burke—attorney. Served as Governor of the State of North Dakota from 1907 to 1912. Served as United States Treasurer from 1912 to 1920. Served on the Supreme Court of North Dakota from 1925 to 1937.

Frank Hyland—auctioneer. Served as Lieutenant Governor of the State of North Dakota from 1923 to 1924.

H. W. Swenson—attorney. Served as State Treasurer of the State of North Dakota from 1947 to 1948.

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(formerly C. D. Mills)
Irvin Stiles, Prop.
Commercial and Social Printing
Established 1917
Our 40th Anniversary
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THE YOUNG AGENCY
Realtors — Insurance
RAY D. YOUNG
Young Building **Phone 40**

Early History of City Recalled

Sale of the Duplex at 621 Fifth street, which was formerly half of the original Ramsey County Court House and jail recalled early Creel City and Devils Lake history to the late George Elmslie, longtime Register of Deeds.

The duplex and the apartment building at 619 Fifth street were constructed from the old frame court house which was originally moved from its location in "Old Devils Lake," about 3 miles east of the present city, which was then known as Creel City.

In a letter from the Daily Journal, Elmslie was questioned about the Original site of Creel City and he replied: "You are correct when you say Creel City was where Devils Lake now is located." It happened Col. Creel wanted the city called Creel City and opened up a post office in the vicinity of the present Grandma's Eat Shop, and called it Creel City Post Office.

Elmslie continued that "The railroad had advertised the Devils Lake region before the train got west of Larimore." I distinctly recollect the maps showing steamboats crossing the lake in all directions and the picture of a railroad station called Devils Lake right where it is now. The lake at that time came right up to where the powerhouse is now.

"The railroad called its station Devils Lake, and later on they held an election and changed the name from Creel City to Devils Lake, and of course the post office name was changed too."

We called the place where the frame court house came from "Old Devils Lake". I worked in both the frame and the brick court house and recall some facts forgotten by the general public.

"We had no County Auditor then and John A. Percival as Register of Deeds was the County Clerk also. Mr. Percival as Register of Deeds got no salary but got all the fees for himself, and of course personally paid his help."

For a few years his was the only busy office in the Court house. He got $50.00 a month in County warrants as County clerk, and his office had the combined work of Register of Deeds and Auditor. That made us hustle and sometimes we worked from 7 in the morning to 10 at night.

"When we got into the brick court house, Henry Hale was appointed County Auditor which left us only Register of Deeds work. Of course, I remember a lot about the brick court house in 1887 and 1888..

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For years the Court house room was the only place in town where any visiting shows could meet and I have frequently been the usher at such shows."

Elmslie recalled that at one time Devils Lake was the fourth largest city in Dakota Territory and "tried hard to convince ourselves we were the third largest."

When Towner brought a train load of Dunkards bound for Cando to Devils Lake, it was right in the middle of a howling March blizzard and all the women and children were huddled into the Court room and filled the whole room sleeping on the floor. Most of the men stayed on the train to look after the stock. I went with the bunch to fix abstracts of title on the lands they bought, and landed in the midst of another blizzard which lasted through the night.

An incident of interest in connection with the early history of Ramsey County was the naming of Rock Island, where our present Lakewood Park is located. The island was named after a trader name Rocque, who had a trading post there. Graham's Island was named in the same manner, after a trader who had a trading post on the Island long before any white settlers came to Dakota Territory.

Some of the early happenings in Ramsey County:

1. The first grain binder was used in 1881 by Mr. Palmer.
2. The first actual settlers on the north shore of Devils Lake were Hugh Thompson and Charles Becker.
3. The first threshing machine was a J. I. Case machine owned by Ed. Lohnes.
4. First store was located at Grand Harbor.
5. First post office was located at Grand Harbor.
6. The first white baby was born to Mr. and Mrs. Wylie in 1881.
7. First newspaper published was "The Globe," published at Grand Harbor.
8. First physician in the county was Dr. Ruger.
9. First depot agent in the county was Mr. Naugle, who later married Capt. E. E. Heerman's daughter. Capt. Heerman was the owner of the first steamboat to run on Devils Lake.
10. The first train to arrive at Devils Lake was on July 4, 1883.

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CHAUTAUQUA

The Chautauqua Association held its first season at what is now Lakewood Park from June 28th to July 17, 1893. It started out largely as an educational institution and then had: A school of music, a school of physical culture, a schoo of elocution, a school of art, a school of pulpit oratory, a school of Hebrew. Chautauqua boasted many great orators, including William Jennings Bryan, the peer of them all, who spoke here more than once. He had to speak to the 15,000 who showed up to hear him in the ball park, since the auditorium could not accommodate the crowd. Most of his listeners stood up in the sun for more than an hour during his spell-binding address. Robert M. LaFollette and William Howard Taft also drew great crowds at Chautauqua.

A three-story hotel was built on the Chautauqua grounds for those who did not wish to camp out during the Chautauqua season. A railroad connected the grounds with the city, four miles away. The grounds also had restaurants, ice-cream parlors, a grocery, and a bakery. In addition to the cultural programs, a full schedule of recreation was available, including baseball, cycling, croquet, tennis, swimming, and boating.

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The Legend of Minnewaukan

By MISS RENA PERCIVAL, Devils Lake

(Reprinted from Devils Lake Illustrated — published 1898)

By the lake's yet heaving waters, on the rocks beside the strand,
Crouched the women, wildly wailing, one despairing, sobbing band:
For those waters now so smiling, tossing sportive at their feet,
Had in cruel wrath bereft them, had engulfed their homing feet.
Thus the death song each still ending, gazing wistful o'er the brine,
"Minnewaukan! Spirit Water! Cause of woe to me and mine!"

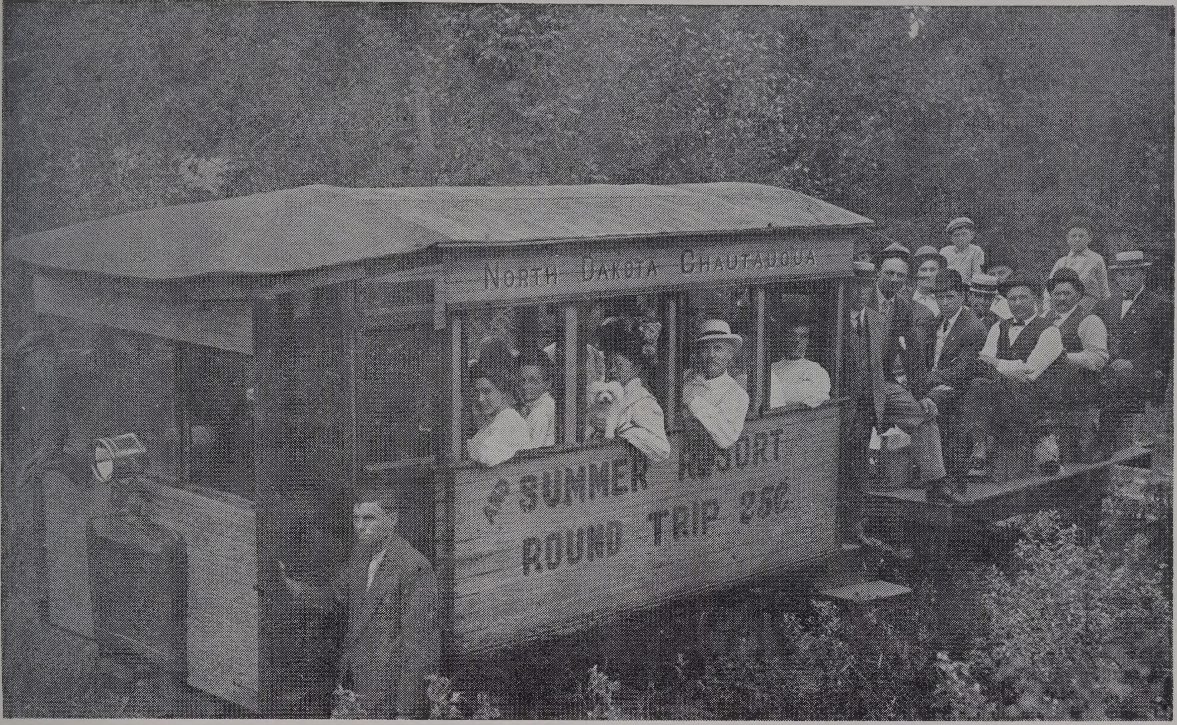
Stood the chieftain's dark eyed daughter, 'mid the women of her tribe.
Wild she gazed across those waters that nor tear nor vow could bribe.
As they mourned the ne'er returning, gave to grief an utterance free.
For a father wept Nadessa, for her love, for brethren three.
"Watha!" cried she, "Mighty hunter! Bravest of a mighty line!
Whelmed in Meda's bitter waters, cruel e'er to me and mine!"

Dimmed, her eyes see not the splendor of that wood embosomed gem.
Not the hills, blue in the distance, with their sylvan diadem,
Not the crested, sage-green waters, dancing in the western sun.
Not a sunlit, stately pinewood, backed by rising vapors dun!
But the dirge, with bitter wailing, sang she with the sun's decline.
"Minnewaukan! Haunted Water! Name of woe to me and mine!"

"Vain! Ah, vain!" she cried, "the warnings of Owanda, gifted seer,
Made to meet the hated foeman, caution the despised as fear,
Eager courage, slighted counsel, laughed the wizard's words to scorn.
Dreams and omens disregarded, spirit voices cease to warn.
All too late they saw their error, struggling mid the seething brine,
In dread Meda's fatal waters, baneful e'er to me and mine.

What availed the foeman vanquished? What availed the victor's songs
Raised by chieftains famed in battle, raised by warriors brave and strong?
When like seamews o'er the waters homeward sped each swift canoe,
Then the vengeful water-spirit raised her awful form to view.
Ah! why heard they not the warning uttered by the voice divine?
"Minnewaukan! Mystic Water! Woeful, weird to me and mine."

Still the legend's unforgotten of that fair but dreaded lake
Where Nadessa threw her headlong, courting death for Watha's sake.
Still, beside the nightly campfire warriors tell with bated breath
How their forms are seen to hover, undivided, e'en in death,
When the storm begins to mutter, when the sun has veiled his face
O'er dark Meda's haunted water, shunned by all Dacotah's race.



Another view of the Chautauqua Railroad

The Phantom Ship

The following is a story from the pen of J. Morlay Wyard, published in the Park River Gazette many years ago:

"A short time ago the writer crossed Devils Lake in the "good ship Minnie H" from the Chautauqua grounds to Fort Totten, and witnessed two most interesting appearances of the much talked of but rare illusion, "The phantom ship". July 17, the closing day of the Chautauqua program, 1893, was a typical North Dakota summer day. The Spirit Water could not have wooed its devotees more enchantingly. It was just such a morning when even the least imaginative might expect to see the sirens sporting in the pellucid depts, or mermaids embayed in the secluded nooks coyly combing their tresses as their beauty was reflected in the silver mirror. There was not a fleck of cloud upon the sky or a ripple on the lake. Overhead the gulls swept by, around the boat the terns and loons merrily played their antics. Along the shore the trees in summer beauty were reproduced upon the crystal surface. The glamor of the mirage was over all. When the boat was well out in the center of the bay, suddenly there appeared on the southern shorefi westward of the Fort, what looked like the hull of a large vessel, without mast or spar or sail and the color of new timber. Motionless it lay, distinctly in view, apparently half a dozen miles away, until, as the boat drew nearer the Fort, the Point of Rocks intervened between the vessel and the vision, and the spectre vanished.

The steamer waited only a few minutes at the Fort, but on the return trip nothing could be seen where half an hour before the phantom had seemed so substantial—only dark foliage of the trees contrasting with the brightness of the water. But, far down the strait that separates Graham's Island from the southern shore, there appeared the glint of a sail, that, emerging from the distant outlet, came more clearly into sight. Though the air was breathless, the fairy craft swept along with wonderful rapidity until it might have covered ten miles in about as many minutes. Its rapid fiight could be definitely measured. Upon the shore the taller trees were outlined against the sky, and the mystic yacht sped past them close under the land, until it too, like the sailless and motionless hull of the earlier trip, disappeared at the boulder point near Fort Totten. All melted into air like the baseless fabric of a vision.

The whole spectacle was so beautiful that it would be a pity to spoil the memory of it with materiality or any scientific explanation. It is no wonder that poor Lo, the Indian, "whose untutored mind saw God in clouds and hearm him in the winds," should fear to launch his bark upon the watery world where spirits held to him, such bewildering and inexplicable revelry."

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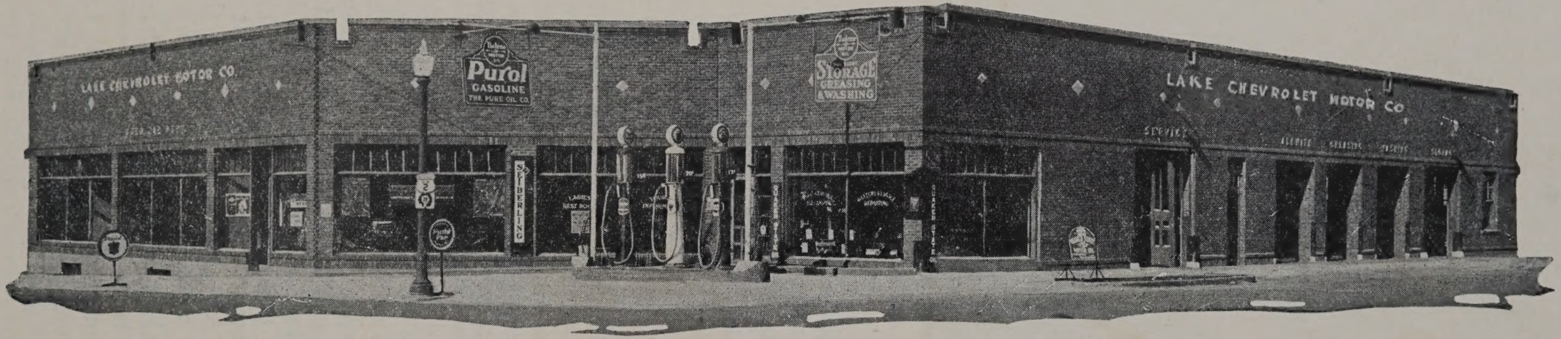
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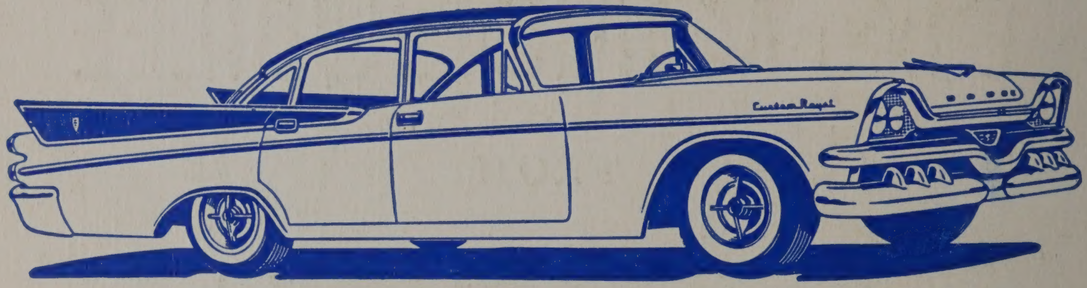

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